



LITTLE BOOKS ON ART

HOPPNER

H. P. K. SKIPTON



No 4079a 318



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# **LITTLE BOOKS ON ART**

**GENERAL EDITOR: CYRIL DAVENPORT**

**JOHN HOPPNER**

## LITTLE BOOKS ON ART

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*John Hoppner*





# JOHN HOPPNER

BY

H. P. K. SKIPTON

WITH FORTY ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO.

36 ESSEX STREET W.C.

LONDON

*c*

June 11. 1917  
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*First Published in 1905*

YOUNG ALBION  
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NOTES TO

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## PREFACE

SO far as the writer is aware, this is the first attempt at anything like a complete study of the life of John Hoppner, the great artist whose name and work were so strangely forgotten when his memory should have been most green, so suddenly to be rediscovered and restored to his rightful place during the last few years. Much remains to be done ere the circumstances of Hoppner's career can be known with any completeness, and nobody is better aware than the writer that this little book is only a first step on the road. But for the kindness of many owners of Hoppner's works, who have permitted him to inspect their pictures and have answered at length and in detail requests for information, it would have been impossible to accomplish even so much, and the writer is sensible of his debts. His thanks are especially due to those whose pictures appear in this volume. The writer has also to acknowledge kindly assistance and advice from Mr. Lionel Cust, M.V.O., F.S.A.; to Miss Ida Taaffe he is under deep obligations for much miscellaneous help, especially in the way of taking photographs, and also to Miss Constance Moore and Mr. Henry Jenner, F.S.A.

H. P. K. S.

BUSHEY HEATH,

*March, 1905*



# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS

Who was Hoppner's father?—The circumstances of his birth—A "Child of the Chapel Royal"—The mystery of his youthful trouble—A possible explanation—Mrs. Hoppner and the place under the Customs—At the Academy Schools—Early successes—Mrs. Patience Wright—Hoppner marries Phœbe Wright—The last of the elder Mrs. Hoppner . . . . .	page 1
--	--------

## CHAPTER II

### FIRST SUCCESSES

1780-1784

The new home of the Royal Academy—The flowering-time of British art—Hoppner's early pictures—Lady Cunliffe—"The Fortune-teller"—Mrs. Robinson ("Perdita")—The Countess of Mexborough—William Locke, junr.—The Royal Academy, 1784—Hoppner's portraits identified—Dr. Edmund Ayrton—Hoppner and Sir Joshua—Hoppner and the Court—His reputation established . . .	14
--	----

## CHAPTER III

### CONTINUED PROSPERITY

1785-1786

1785 a prosperous year—Portraits of the Royal Princesses—"Eliza" from <i>Yorrick</i> —"Neæra"—"Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse"—Its detractors—"Julia de Roubigné"—Loss of favour at Court—The first appearance of Lawrence—An anecdote from Rogers—Birth of Helen Clarence Hoppner and Catherine Hampden Hoppner—Also of Richard Belgrave Hoppner—The intimacy with Gifford—"The Show"—Praise from the critics . . . . .	28
---	----

## CHAPTER IV

## THE RISE OF LAWRENCE

1787-1790

- 1787—"Caroline de Lichtfield"—Faulty drawing fashionable—Ramberg's engraving of the Royal Academy, 1787—The Fielding portraits—First impressions of Lawrence—A courtier and "ladies' man"—William Smith—1789, Portrait Painter to the Prince of Wales—Lord Henry Fitzgerald—The Godsall children—1790, Mrs. Bunbury and Mrs. Gwyn—J. M. W. Turner in boyhood page 42

## CHAPTER V

## IN THE SACRED CIRCLE

1791-1795

- 1791—Royal portraits—Mrs. Jordan as "Hypolita"—Portraits of Hoppner's children—The death of Sir Joshua—The rivalry of Lawrence—He is elected an Associate under Court pressure before Hoppner—Portrait of the Prince of Wales—Arabella Diana, Duchess of Dorset—Elected A.R.A.—Anthony Pasquin—Lady Caroline Capel—Mrs. Parkyns—Lady Charlotte Legge—His own portrait—The story of Haydn's portrait—Elected R.A.—The Douglas children . . . . . 57

## CHAPTER VI

## THE ZENITH

1795 (continued) to 1797

- 1795, the Frankland daughters—"Dear dead women"—The Countess of Darnley—Pasquin's *Critical Guide*—"Some embarrassments"—1796, Hoppner at his best—"Miranda"—Mrs. Lascelles—Lady Charlotte Campbell—Mrs. Jordan as "Rosalind"—Lady Bligh—The Beresford portraits—Thomas Babington of Rothley Temple—The Supplementary Militia and Gillray—1797, another triumph for Hoppner—Mrs. Sheridan—Lady Oxford—The Sackville children—Lady Coote—Pasquin's depreciation . . . . . 72



## CHAPTER VII

### GIFFORD AND GILLRAY

1797 (continued) to 1798

Gifford and Pasquin—Peter Pindar—Hoppner and Gifford—The Murray Portrait—The Ireland Portrait—"Titianus Redivivus"—1798, a successful year for Hoppner—Lady Anne Lambton and Children—The Countess of Oxford—Admiral Lord Duncan—The Hon. Mrs. E. Bouverje—The Hibbert portraits—The Earl of Inchiquin—The Whitbread portraits—The Countess of Euston—Lady Elizabeth Howard—Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, <i>née</i> Compton	page 88
--	---------

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME GREAT PORTRAITS

1799-1800

1799, the Duchess-Countess—"Mr. Boswell"—Viscountess Melbourne—The Earl of Chatham—Mrs. Arbuthnot—Did our great-grandmothers prefer to seem "fast"?—Bad times—Lady Andover—Lady Langham—Lady Georgiana Gordon—Lady Anne Culling Smith and daughters—Paulet Mildmay—The Bishop of Bangor—1800, Hoppner's grand climacteric—Indications of chronic illness—Production unequal and irregular henceforth	102
--	-----

## CHAPTER IX

### BEGINNINGS OF ILL HEALTH

1801-1804

1801, nothing by Hoppner at the Royal Academy—Relations with the Darnley family—Edward, afterwards fifth Lord Darnley—Lady Darnley and her daughter—Henry Thornton and the "Clapham Sect"—Thomas Graham of Balgowan—"Scene from <i>Cymbeline</i> "—Lady Heathcote as Hebe—Altered in deference to the engraver—1802, Peace of Amiens and the visit to Paris—1803, eight pictures in the Royal Academy—"Psyche"—"Love me, love my dog"—Miss Cholmondeley—The Countess of Cholmondeley and her children—The great portrait of Lord Nelson—Portraits of Lady Douglas and Miss Pollok—The Archbishop of Narbonne	115
--	-----

## CHAPTER X

## A RALLY

1805-1806

1805, Hoppner "revived to his full exertions"—"The Nabob"—Its identity—Mrs. Jerningham as Hebe—Lady Caroline Lamb—Lady Palmerston—Dr. Waagen and Hoppner's pictures—The Duchess of Rutland—1806, Sir Arthur Wellesley—John Hookham Frere—"The Sleeping Nymph" and contemporary criticism—William Pitt . . . . .	page 129
---	----------

## CHAPTER XI

## THE END

1807-1810

1807, Hoppner "even more than ordinarily successful"—Lady Louisa Manners and the "record" sale—The replica at Ham House—Lady Mary Grenville—George Canning—1808, sent nothing to the Royal Academy—Increasing ill health—1809, last contributions to the Royal Academy—Mrs. Inchbald—The beginnings of <i>The Quarterly</i> —Hoppner's active interest and writing for it—Severe illness at Ryde—Last illness and death—Miscellaneous and undated portraits—R. B. Sheridan—Edmund Burke—C. J. Fox—Inaccessibility of Hoppner's pictures—Very few in public galleries and a great number gone abroad—Revival of interest in Hoppner's works . . . . .	140
--	-----

## CHAPTER XII

## PERSONAL AND CRITICAL

Hoppner's career uneventful—The inferiority of Lawrence's work to his—Hoppner's famous criticism of Lawrence supported by Reynolds—The rivalry of Hoppner and Lawrence not political—Hoppner's friends among all parties—Gifford's word-portrait of Hoppner—Hoppner as a literary man—Contributions to <i>The Quarterly</i> — <i>Oriental Tales</i> —His love for the country—Hoppner's place in English art with Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney—The death of Hoppner closed the great school of English portrait-painting . . . . .	154
A CATALOGUE OF THE PRINCIPAL WORKS BY JOHN HOPPNER, R.A. . . . .	165
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	179
INDEX . . . . .	180

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
JOHN HOPPNER . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THE COUNTESS OF MEXBOROUGH . . . . .	4
"THE SHOW" . . . . .	8
"CAROLINE DE LICHTFIELD" . . . . .	12
LORD HENRY FITZGERALD . . . . .	16
PORTRAIT OF A LADY (WALLACE COLLECTION) . . . . .	20
"INFANT VANITY" . . . . .	24
MRS. GWYN . . . . .	28
MRS. BUNBURY . . . . .	32
MRS. JORDAN AS "HYPOLITA" . . . . .	36
"CHILDREN BATHING" . . . . .	40
LADY CHARLOTTE LEGGE . . . . .	44
THE DOUGLAS CHILDREN . . . . .	48
THE DAUGHTERS OF SIR THOMAS FRANKLAND . . . . .	52
THE COUNTESS OF DARNLEY . . . . .	56
THE EARL OF CARLISLE . . . . .	60
MISS AGNES COUSSMAKER . . . . .	64
WILLIAM GIFFORD . . . . .	68
MRS. LASCELLES, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS OF HAREWOOD . . . . .	72
GEORGE HIBBERT . . . . .	76
MRS. GEORGE HIBBERT . . . . .	80
THE COUNTESS OF EUSTON . . . . .	84
LADY ANNE CULLING SMITH AND DAUGHTERS . . . . .	88

# xiv      LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
"THE NABOB" . . . . .	92
MRS. SHERIDAN AND CHILD . . . . .	96
THE LADIES CATHERINE AND SARAH BLIGH . . . . .	102
"PSYCHE" . . . . .	106
"LOVE ME, LOVE MY DOG" . . . . .	110
MISS MARY LINWOOD . . . . .	114
EDWARD, FIFTH EARL OF DARNLEY . . . . .	118
HENRY THORNTON, M.P. . . . .	122
MISS CHOLMONDELEY . . . . .	128
THE COUNTESS OF CHOLMONDELEY AND HER SON . . . . .	134
LADY CAROLINE LAMB . . . . .	138
THE DUCHESS OF RUTLAND . . . . .	142
"A SLEEPING NYMPH" . . . . .	146
LADY LOUISA MANNERS . . . . .	150
THE MARQUESS OF THOMOND . . . . .	154
LADY ANNE LAMBTON AND CHILDREN . . . . .	158
LADY ELIZABETH CAVENDISH . . . . .	160
BISHOP CLEAVER . . . . .	164

“THE highest thing that Art can do is to set before you the true image of the presence of a noble human being. It has never done more than this, and it ought not to do less. . . . You may have much more brilliant and impressive qualities in imaginative pictures; you may have figures scattered like clouds, or garlanded like flowers; you may have light and shade, as of a tempest, and colour as of the rainbow; but all that is child’s play to the great men, though it is astonishment to us. Their real strength is tried to the utmost, and as far as I know, it is never elsewhere brought out so thoroughly, as in painting one man or woman, and the soul that was in them.”

RUSKIN, *Lectures on Art.*



# JOHN HOPPNER

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY YEARS

Who was Hoppner's father?—The circumstances of his birth—A "Child of the Chapel Royal"—The mystery of his youthful trouble—A possible explanation—Mrs. Hoppner and the place under the Customs—At the Academy Schools—Early successes—Mrs. Patience Wright—Hoppner marries Phoebe Wright—The last of the elder Mrs. Hoppner.

THE world is never likely to know with exactness the antecedents of John Hoppner. It may be regarded as certain that he was born on April 4th, 1759, for his friend, William Gifford, as do other biographers, expressly states that he was in the fifty-first year of his age when he died on January 23rd, 1810, and it seems to be generally agreed that he was born in Whitechapel. One of the earliest biographical notices of him (though not earlier than that of Gifford), that which appears in *The Gallery of British Portraits*, published in 1822, gives the year of his birth as 1758, and that of his death as 1809; but there is

plenty of authority to show that the latter date is wrong, and, in view of the otherwise unchallenged assertion that he was in his fifty-first year when he died, it may be assumed that the former date is wrong also. In view of the mystery attaching to his birth these points are of some importance. His mother is described as one of the German attendants at the Royal Palace, but her names, Mary Anne, rather suggest English ancestry, and she was thirty years old when her son was born. Her tombstone records that she was "the widow of John Hoppner, Surgeon," but whether she was a widow when she took service in the Palace does not appear. If her son took his looks from her, she must have been exceedingly beautiful. The question of his paternity has never been definitely settled, and probably never will be. The writer of the notice in 1822 says guardedly, "His father, we believe, came to this country some time before the present reign." But, save upon Mrs. Hoppner's tombstone, her husband's name is never mentioned; and Hoppner's enemies, who in after times were wont to twit him with not denying the loftier descent attributed to him, never ventured to assert specifically that "John Hoppner, Surgeon," was his real father, as they might easily have done had there been any basis for the statement. On the other hand, his contemporaries certainly believed, and Hoppner himself never contradicted the general opinion, that he was a natural son of King George III. Writing in 1796 in a pamphlet entitled *The Memoirs of the Royal Academicians*, an incomplete copy of which is in the British



Museum, Anthony Pasquin (whose real name was John Williams) has the following :—

“Mr. Hoppner, R.A., was born in London, and educated as the child of a domestic, under the direction of His Majesty; from which circumstance many have inferred that he is a natural offspring from the royal loins, and this idea has not been sufficiently weakened by his own broad suggestions.”

The story has been contemptuously dismissed as absurd by the late Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse and other recent biographers; but the earlier view has been accepted by an apparently well-informed writer in *Notes and Queries* (Fourth Series, vol. xi. 21-6-1873), who speaks of the Rev. Thomas Gifford Gallwey as “a grandson of Hoppner, and, there can be little, if any, doubt, a great-grandson of George III.” This view would seem to have commended itself also to a writer in *The Art Journal* for 1891, who writes: “He bore his mother’s name, and in his childhood toddled about the passages and corridors of St. James’s Palace, where he was looked upon as a little chance person.” To our mind this version of the matter is the most probable one, and it is certainly supported in some degree by subsequent events.

It is clear that the little lad early developed a fine voice and a decided predilection for music, and that he attracted royal notice and was enrolled as one of the choristers in the Chapel Royal; after which, it is generally said, as soon as his voice broke, he was sent to the Academy Schools at the King’s expense, whence he plunged forthwith into

a prosperous career in art. The date of his entry into the Academy Schools is recorded as 1775, that is to say, when he was sixteen years old. A very little inquiry, however, shows that this is an exceedingly incomplete statement of the case.

In the first place, there is the emphatic evidence of William Gifford, to which allusion has already been made. In *The Mæviad*, published in 1796, Gifford writes thus regarding his friend :—

“ Proud of thy friendship, while the voice of fame  
Pursues thy merits with a loud acclaim,  
I share the triumph—not unpleased to see  
Our kindred destinies ; for thou, like me,  
Wast thrown too soon on the world's dangerous tide,  
To sink or swim, as chance might best decide.  
ME, all too weak to gain the distant land,  
The waves had whelmed, but that an outstretched hand  
Kindly upheld, when now with fear unnerved—  
And still protects the life it then preserved.  
THEE, powers untried, perhaps unfelt before,  
Enabled, tho' with pain, to reach the shore,  
While WEST stood by, the doubtful strife to view,  
Nor lent a friendly arm to help thee through.  
Nor ceased the labour there : Hate, ill-suppress,  
Advantage took of thy ingenuous breast,  
Where saving wisdom yet had placed no screen,  
But every word and every thought was seen,  
To darken all thy life—'Tis past : most bright  
Through the departing gloom thou strikest the sight ;  
While baffled malice hastes thy powers to own,  
And wonders at thy worth so long unknown. . . .  
Go then, since the long struggle now is o'er,  
And envy can obstruct thy fame no more. . . .”

This is strong language, and it is used by one who knew what he was talking about and spoke



THE COUNTESS OF MEXBOROUGH



advisedly. Gifford's earlier career had been of the roughest. Two years older than Hoppner, he had been born in poor circumstances, left an orphan at the age of twelve ; he went to sea as a cabin-boy, and after that served for four years as a shoemaker's apprentice ; and it was not until his nineteenth year that any helping hand was held out to him, and a patron sent him to the university. He made no attempt at concealing his lowly origin or the difficulties which he had overcome, recording them all in an *Autobiography*, which can still be read by the curious in such matters. If, then, he deliberately yielded the palm for sufferings undergone and difficulties overcome to his friend, he must have done so with good reason. It may be taken as certain that Hoppner was somehow cast adrift as a boy, and only succeeded in righting himself by his own exertions, and that, too, in spite of the enmity of West, who abstained from helping him when help would have been welcome. Rose alone of his later biographers (in his *Biographical Dictionary*, published in 1857) has taken any cognisance of this ; and he, while citing Gifford as an authority, appears to have had access to some other source of information besides. He writes, probably with truth :—

“ He (Hoppner) was indebted for his eminence chiefly to his own exertions, having received scarcely any instruction in the art ; and the untiring energy with which he pursued his professional career, in spite of the difficulties he encountered in early life, is touchingly set forth by

his friend, Mr. William Gifford, in one of his best poems."

The question next arises as to how these difficulties were created. We have seen young Hoppner in the Palace, a chorister in the Chapel Royal, and in undoubted favour with the King. What happened so entirely to change his position and prospects? We cannot tell for certain, but we can make a very shrewd conjecture. In *The Annual Register* of 1773 we find that on July 6th of that year a case was heard in the law courts, in which Richard Chapman, one of the pages to His Majesty, was sued by one Joseph Walker, to recover the sum of fifty pounds, paid through the said Richard Chapman to Mrs. Hoppner as part payment of seventy guineas, in consideration of which the defendant, Richard Chapman, had promised to procure for the plaintiff, through Mrs. Hoppner, a place in the Customs. A verdict was entered for the plaintiff with fifty pounds damages and costs. The case must have been something of a *cause célèbre*, or it would hardly have found a place in *The Annual Register*. It could hardly have failed, also, to create a considerable sensation at Court, where the only possible construction to be put upon it would be that Mrs. Hoppner was in the habit of presuming, or pretending to the world to presume, for her own profit, upon her past relations with the King. The Queen would scarcely have passed over such an episode without protest—probably pretty vigorous protest. It would not have been surprising if the King, angry and smarting under the reproaches of his

Queen, had ordered Mrs. Hoppner and her son away from Court altogether ; and if he did so, we should have an ample explanation of the misfortunes and difficulties to which Gifford alludes with such emphasis. To us it seems most likely that this is what occurred, and that Mrs. Hoppner and her son, then a boy of fourteen, and perhaps a daughter,<sup>1</sup> were summarily turned adrift to pick up a living as best they could.

Two years afterwards we find John Hoppner entered as a pupil in the Royal Academy Schools at the King's expense, from which we may infer that his talents had somehow attracted attention enough to soften the King as regarded himself, to the extent, at least, of providing him with a fair start in life. He must have cultivated his artistic abilities to good purpose during this period of adversity ; indeed, it may be that Gifford's reference in the couplet already quoted—

“THEE, powers untried, perhaps unfelt before,  
Enabled, tho' with pain, to reach the shore”—

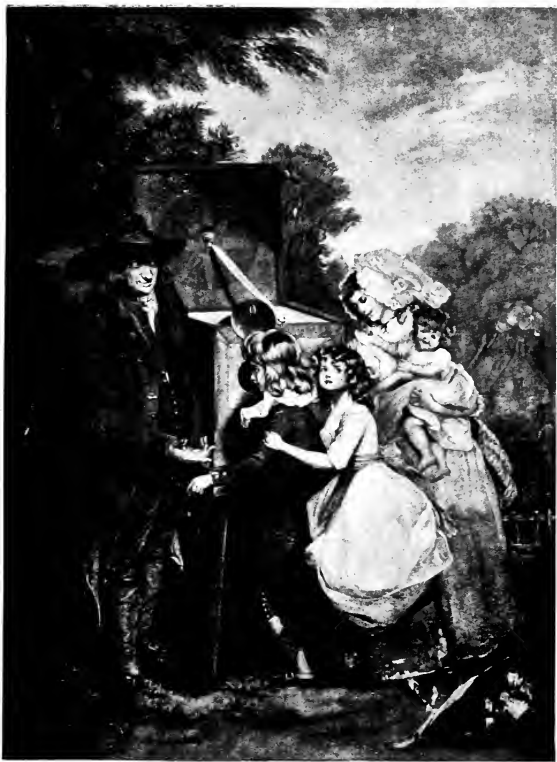
indicates that the discovery and development of his pictorial gifts were directly induced by the pressure of want. Elsewhere Gifford speaks of him as one “whose hard destiny it was to struggle with many difficulties through the intermediate stages

<sup>1</sup> This daughter was probably the mother of Henry Meyer, the engraver, born in 1782, who is explicitly stated to have been Hoppner's nephew. One J. H. Meyer, a drawing-master and also an engraver, lived in Charles Street, St. James's, near the Hoppners, and he was probably her husband.

of an arduous profession." The inference that his mother was turned away from Court and left in reduced circumstances is supported, too, by a spiteful observation of Anthony Pasquin in 1796, when, speaking scornfully of Hoppner's growing reputation, he observes that at least no one could charge his rival, Lawrence, with "undutifulness to an old friend or an old parent," the implication being evidently that Hoppner had neglected his mother in her need. Perhaps the "old friend" was West.

How Hoppner came to incur the enmity of West is not clear, but it is certain that he did so. Allusions both by Gifford and Rogers place the fact beyond a doubt. Benjamin West was emphatically a *persona grata* at Court from 1763 until his dismissal in 1801, and his influence over the King was considerable. He was also a friend and compatriot of Mrs. Patience Wright, whose younger daughter, Phœbe, Hoppner subsequently married; and this same daughter often appeared in West's own pictures. He must have met Hoppner frequently at the Wrights' house, besides having known him in his early days at Court. It is on record, too, that he and Hoppner co-operated in giving Joseph Wright a start in the artistic world, so that one would have expected them to be on good terms. The most likely explanation is that young Hoppner, who was never famous for keeping his tongue under control, wounded West's self-esteem, which was well developed by nature and sedulously fostered besides by the praises of the Court, by some





"THE SHOW"—PORTRAITS OF LADY DUNCANNON AND HER CHILDREN ✓



injudicious comparison of his work with that of Sir Joshua, whom the Court did not love, to West's disadvantage. This was an offence that West would only forgive "as a Christian," and was not likely to forgive even in that limited measure. A story is current that it was Hoppner's outspoken admiration for Sir Joshua that cost him the favour of the Court early in his career; but Rogers, who knew all the secret history of the time, also attributed it to West's ill offices. Gifford's lines, already quoted—

"While WEST stood by, the doubtful strife to view,  
Nor lent a friendly hand to help thee through.  
Nor ceased thy labour there : Hate, ill-suppress,  
Advantage took of thy ingenuous breast,  
Where saving, wisdom yet had placed no screen,  
But every word and every thought was seen,  
To darken all thy life"—

probably had reference to some incident of this kind, which "darkened all his life" by costing him his footing at Court. "A painter should cut his tongue out if he wishes to succeed," said Northcote some years later; and certainly the saying applied with especial force to Hoppner, whose too facile gift of speech made him enemies all his life, and handicapped him heavily in the struggle with such cool and calculating natures as those of West in his early life, and of Lawrence in his later years.

At the Academy Schools Hoppner distinguished himself. "Entering a probationer," says Allan Cunningham, "with his chalk and paper, he ascended slowly and systematically through all

the steps required, till, with paint on his palette, and a brush in his hand, he contended for the highest prizes of the institution." He exhibited in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1780 and 1781, in the former two pictures, "A Primrose Girl" and a "Portrait of a Lady"; in the latter a "Portrait of a Lady." During this period he was in lodgings at "Mr. Chamberlaine's, North Audley Street, Grosvenor Square"; and it would seem that he had already made the acquaintance of the Wrights, for, in all probability, the "Primrose Girl" exhibited in 1780 was a portrait of pretty Phoebe Wright, to whom he was engaged in the following year, and was married in 1782. She was a favourite model with several artists, including West, and she continued to sit to her husband for several years. Her pleasant face is familiar to us in his pictures and engravings from his pictures in a dozen different guises. She inherited, by all accounts, a considerable share of her mother's abilities, and was said to be clever at working with her fingers. A fragment of a letter to her mother remains, written in 1781, we should conjecture soon after her engagement, in the true sisterly vein:—

"I beg you not to write to Joseph in such a style as will encourage him to think I will make a fortune for him; for Joe is inclined enough already to be idle, and he receives money from the waxwork exhibition, and spends it at pleasure."

After his marriage Hoppner resided with the Wrights in Cockspur Street, Haymarket, for a couple of years, until his growing fortunes justi-

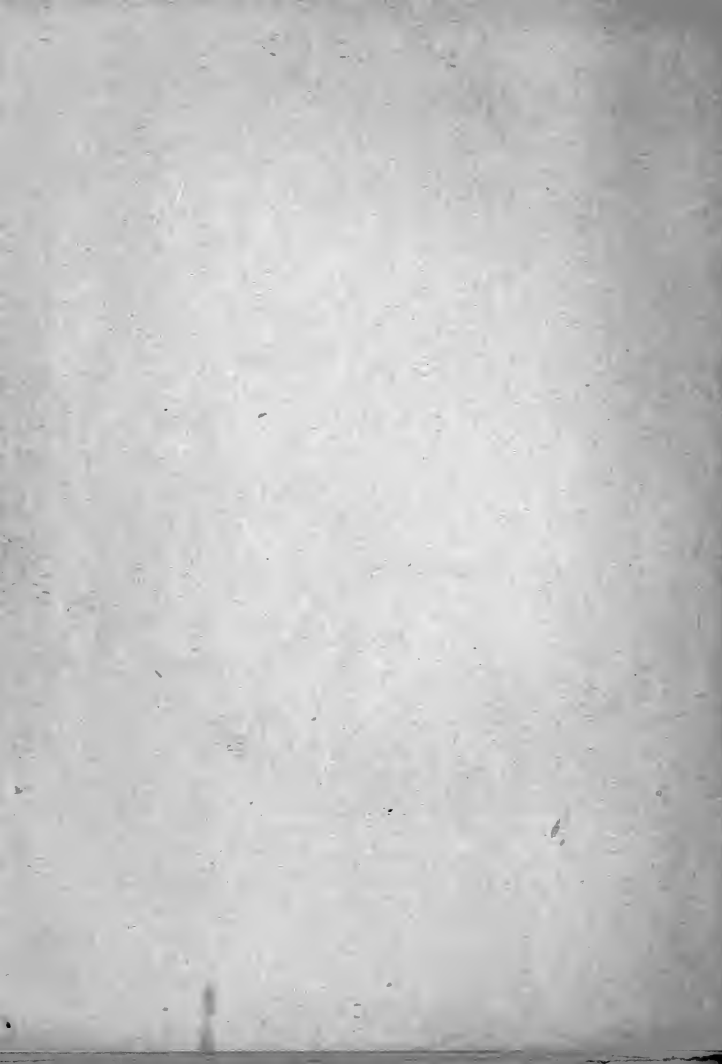
fied the couple in setting up house for themselves, which they did at 13, Charles Street, St. James's Square, where Hoppner lived for the rest of his life. The proximity of Carlton House, where the Prince of Wales took up his quarters in the same year, probably had something to do with the choice of locality, though Hoppner's break with the Court at St. James's did not occur until some years later. In 1782 he won the gold medal offered by the Academy for the best historical painting by a student for his picture of "A Scene from King Lear"; and in the same year he exhibited three pictures, including one of his wife as "A Salad Girl," well known through William Ward's engraving. Thenceforward he seems to have been a marked man. "To-day," wrote his wife, in a letter dated June 3rd, of that year, "the exhibition closes. If Hoppner should be as successful next year as he has been this, he will have established a reputation."

Hoppner owed something, probably a great deal, to the influence of his mother-in-law, Mrs. Patience Wright, a remarkable woman, whose house was a well-known resort of the literary and artistic society of the day. "The late Lord Camden, Dr. Franklin, Mr. Garrick, Samuel Foote, Dr. Dodd, Mr. West, Silas Deane, etc." are mentioned among the company to be met there. She was an American, born in 1725 of Quaker parents at Bordentown, New Jersey, where she married, in 1748, Joseph Wright, also a Quaker, who died in 1769. Her maiden name was Lovell, and she is said to have been a niece

of John Wesley. She took to modelling portraits in wax for a living, and so impressed society in New York by her talents, that she was encouraged to migrate to the greater world of London, which she did in 1772, bringing with her a son and two daughters. Here she soon made her mark, and three years later a grandiloquent notice and a clever outline portrait of her (perhaps after the full-length painting which was shown in the Royal Academy of 1780) appeared in *The London Magazine*. Her collection of wax portraits was one of the sights of the town, and much frequented by fashionable society, among whom she was known as "the Promethean Modeller," and was esteemed a capital talker and a shrewd judge of character. "She is a kind of exotic prodigy," says this enthusiastic writer, "and appears, like Pallas, to have come forth complete from the head of Jove." "The expression in her eye is remembered," wrote an admiring compatriot the year before her death, "and an energetic wildness in her manner. While conversing she was busily employed modelling, both hands being under her apron." Mrs. Wright once enjoyed Court favour, but lost it by scolding the King in very outspoken terms for sanctioning the war with America in 1775. During the war she acted as a spy on behalf of the revolted colonies, gaining her information of the intentions of the Government through West and others, and communicating it to Franklin, in Paris. She died in 1785. A full-length wax model of the great Lord Chatham in Westminster Abbey is



"CAROLINE DE LICHTFIELD"





the only work of hers which is known to be in existence.

Of the elder Mrs. Hoppner nothing more is known, save that she died and was buried at Hagley, in Worcestershire, with the following inscription on her tombstone to record the fact. The circumstances which led to her retirement in this secluded spot remain a mystery.

IN MEMORY OF

MARY ANNE HOPPNER,

WIDOW OF THE LATE JOHN HOPPNER, SURGEON,  
AND MOTHER TO THE LATE JOHN HOPPNER, ESQ., R.A.,  
PORTRAIT PAINTER TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.

SHE DIED APRIL 7TH, 1812.

AGED 83.

## CHAPTER II

### FIRST SUCCESSES

1780-1784

The new home of the Royal Academy—The flowering-time of British art—Hoppner's early pictures—Lady Cunliffe—"The Fortune-teller"—Mrs. Robinson ("Perdita")—The Countess of Mexborough—William Locke, junr.—The Royal Academy, 1784—Hoppner's portraits identified—Dr. Edmund Ayrton—Hoppner and Sir Joshua—Hoppner and the Court—His reputation established.

**I**T was in 1780, as we have said, that Hoppner made his first appearance on the walls of the Royal Academy Exhibition. It was a stirring time both in English history and in English art. The Academy had just moved to its new quarters in Somerset House, and the official representatives of English art had been called upon to decorate them. In addition to Sir Joshua, who adorned the ceiling of the library with a figure of Theory, seated on the clouds with a scroll bearing the mystic legend, "Theory is the knowledge of what is truly Nature," there were designs by Cipriani, Carlini, Nollekens, West, and Angelica Kauffmann. Gainsborough and Romney were still alive, but were hardly included within the circle of the immortals. But the world in general was unanimous in recognising the greatness of Sir Joshua,

although the Court was bitterly opposed to him, and it was with difficulty that he procured sittings for the pictures of the royal personages, which, he had contended, should be painted by the President of the Academy to mark its entry into Somerset House. Over the principal entrance was written in Greek, "Let none uncultured enter"; but the prohibition was no more effective than such prohibitions usually are, perhaps because it was expressed in Greek. But Samuel Johnson thought it all "eminently splendid," and set down his opinion in writing; and the equanimity of the Academicians does not seem to have been seriously disturbed by the widespread havoc wrought by the "No Popery" rioters, under Lord George Gordon, in spite of the announcement that Somerset House was one of the buildings marked out for destruction.

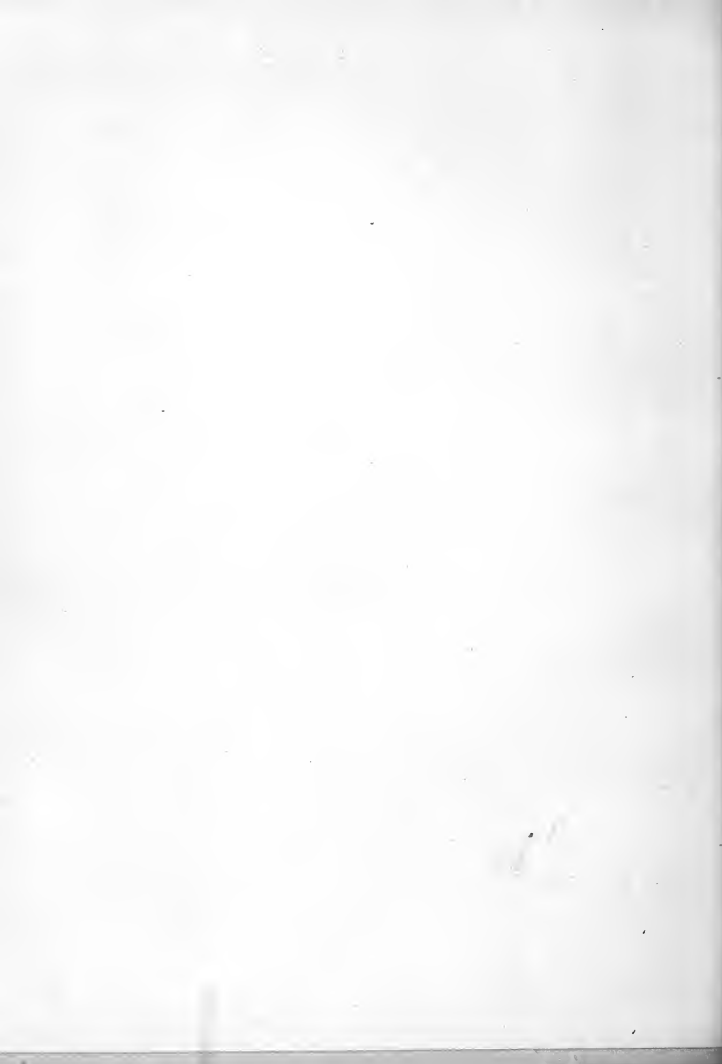
But, indeed, the occurrence of the "No Popery" riots immediately raises the perennial puzzle of what there was in the spirit of that age to produce the great efflorescence in art and letters which undoubtedly characterised its latter years. In spite of the presence of occasional shining lights, the temper of the time was undeniably base; politics had sunk very low; so, too, had religion; and private manners—coincident with a highly polished external veneer among the noble upper classes—were coarse, while of morality the less said the better. The literature of the period was, with bright exceptions, pompous and artificial; and the architecture, in which, according to Ruskin, the expression of the best self and aspirations of a

nation should be found, was probably the worst that our England has ever known, wholly imitative, tasteless, and wretched. One turns over the pages of *The Gentleman's Magazine* and finds pseudo-classical churches, built in defiance of the first principles of the style they professed and with a whole-hearted disregard of ecclesiastical tradition, specially selected for illustration and the warmest praises that the frigid vocabulary of the day could compass. Yet it is certain that there was a strong leaven of goodness at work. The pinchbeck taste of the eighteenth century was visibly melting before an influx of genuineness, indicated by efforts after a return to natural ideals and first principles. Pope had sung of Nature and her ways in polished couplets that gave the lie direct to the sentiments which they expressed; but a dawn was breaking in which men arose who were not afraid to "act the law they lived by without fear," at least according to their lights.

It was the principal glory of Sir Joshua Reynolds and the great English portrait painters, of whom Hoppner was the last, that they initiated the great change, and the landscape painters and the poets followed suit. And it must be remembered that if home politics were corrupt and artificial, there were elemental forces let loose elsewhere which threw men back roughly and forcibly upon first principles. Clive and Hastings in India and the furious conflict in America were not easily regarded without emotion; on the Continent the nations were banded together to wipe us out, and on the high seas, at least, the struggle became one



LORD HENRY FITZGERALD AS "DON FELIX" IN *THE WONDER*



of epic grandeur, almost sufficient to efface the memory of humiliations elsewhere. One wonders how, at such a time, men could find it possible to concentrate themselves upon art; but it is not surprising that when they did so, it should be with an eye to sterner realities and higher ideals than in times of peace. That English artists had not yet wholly shaken off convention Sir Joshua's figure of "Theory" at Somerset House showed; apart from the famous remark of Mrs. Thrale upon his picture of Lady Sarah Bunbury sacrificing to the Graces, painted some years before (which a brother artist had hailed as a great advance in portrait-painting):—"Her face was gloriously handsome, but she used to play cricket and eat beefsteaks on the Steyne at Brighton." But his successors would have little or nothing of this; and, though they might occasionally label their subjects with the name of some well-known character, whether mythological or from modern drama or romance, the resemblance got little further than the setting of the subject, and sometimes became a matter of indifference, as when one of Romney's portraits of Lady Hamilton was known with equal propriety as "Miranda" and "Ariadne." So it may be said, on the whole, that the latter half of the eighteenth century witnessed a movement among the dry bones in the direction of living growth as distinguished from dead convention, whether in painting, music, or poetry. This movement, which ran counter to the external shibboleths of the age, was actually in accord with its deeper and

more vital instincts, which it gradually drew to the surface, until it, too, hardened into a convention and provoked a salutary resistance in its turn. One of the most conspicuous leaders in this return to nature, more whole-hearted and clear-sighted in some respects than Sir Joshua himself, was John Hoppner.

Hoppner started in the fashion of the time with portraits in more or less fancy characters. In 1780 he exhibited two pictures, "A Primrose Girl"—probably a portrait of Phœbe Wright, whom he afterwards married—and a "Portrait of a Lady," which, at this distance of time, it is impossible to identify with certainty, though it may well have been the half-length of Harriet, Lady Cunliffe, exhibited by Sir Robert Cunliffe at the Old Masters in 1877, and again at the "Fair Women" in 1894. The picture is certainly an early work, and was probably painted when the subject of it was engaged to Sir Foster Cunliffe, just before her marriage, which would account for its being termed that of "A Lady" instead of "A Lady of Quality." The first of Hoppner's male portraits which can be dated with confidence is that of Dr. James Nares, organist of the Chapel Royal, which was painted this year. Hoppner had been a choir-boy under him, and this commission probably indicates a retention of old kindness. The picture was engraved in stipple by William Ward, and prefixed to one of Nares's works. The original is missing.

In the Academy Exhibition of 1781 Hoppner was represented by another "Portrait of a Lady,"



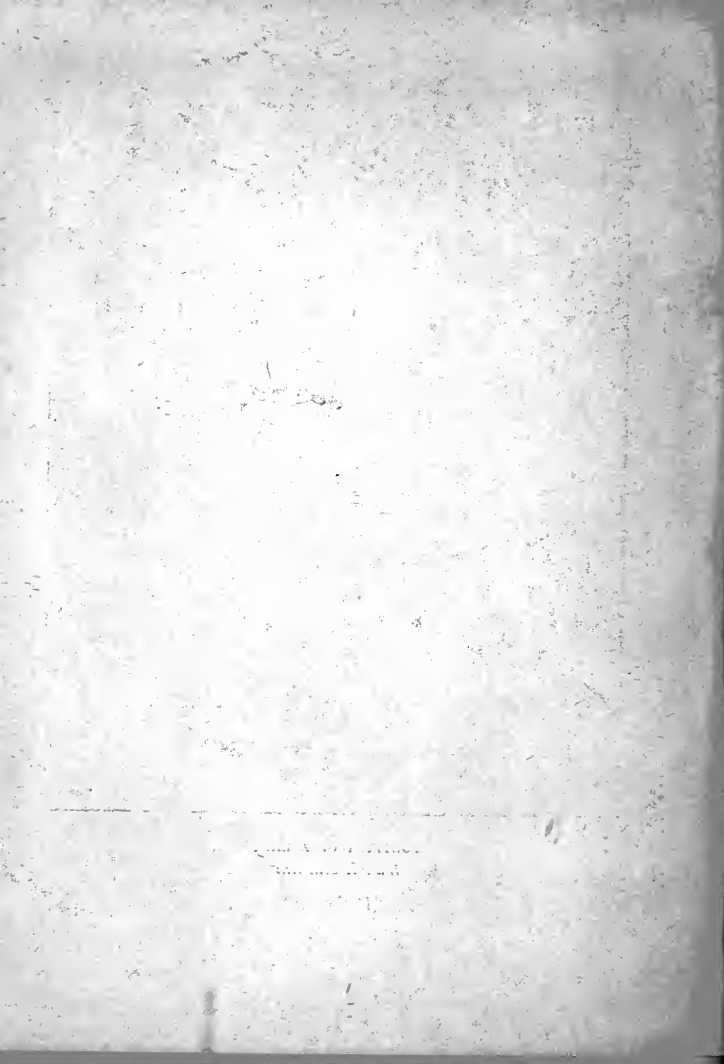
probably the picture afterwards entitled "The Fortune-teller," known to this generation through the engraving by William Humphrey, published in the year following. The picture is a charming three-quarter length; the subject of it, a handsome girl poorly dressed, her head covered by a broad straw hat, stands in a wild landscape, holding up the cards with which she tells her fortunes. It is probable that Phœbe Wright furnished the model for the picture, as in the case of "The Primrose Girl"; and she appeared yet again as a "Girl with Salad" in one of his pictures exhibited in 1782, which was engraved and published in the following February by William Ward. The other two pictures shown by Hoppner in the Academy Exhibition of 1782 were a "Portrait of a Young Lady" and a "Portrait of a Gentleman," neither of which can be identified with certainty. It is not improbable, however, that the latter was the portrait of Sir Richard Brooke, fifth Baronet, of Norton Priory (where the picture still is), who had just succeeded to his baronetcy, and had recently married Miss Mary Cunliffe, sister of Sir Foster Cunliffe, mentioned above. From the letter written by his wife, already quoted, it is evident that Hoppner was now satisfied with his achievements and prospects, and it is significant that his circumstances in this year were such as to justify his marrying Phœbe Wright, to whom he had probably been engaged for some time. The young couple, however, seem to have thought it best to stay on at Cockspur Street at Mrs. Wright's for two years longer.

That Hoppner was rising fast in public esteem is evident from the fact that he shared with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney the doubtful honour of being permitted to paint a portrait of "Perdita," otherwise Mrs. Mary Robinson, whom the Prince of Wales had used so ill. Of her Hoppner painted two—perhaps three—portraits, all of which are known to be in existence. One, a half-length, in black dress and black hat and feathers, with red curtains and landscape background, said to be a replica of the portrait by Sir Joshua, is in the possession of the Duchess of St. Albans, by whom it was shown at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891 and at the Grafton Galleries in 1894. Another, also a half-length, in a grey dress, seated in a landscape, and of the same dimensions (30 inches by 25 inches), but probably an original portrait, changed hands in 1896 for £945. A third, of later date, a half-length, belongs to Mr. James Orrock, in which, however, the likeness is not apparent, though the picture is a fine one. A sketch of Mrs. Robinson by Hoppner was shown by Colonel Harold Malet at the Grafton Galleries in 1894. Another sitter during this year was a Mrs. Benwell, whose identity has been disputed; she was probably a Mary Benwell, an actress, though she may possibly have been a painter of the same name. This picture was engraved by William Ward and published in 1783. According to William Sandby, Mrs. Siddons was one of Hoppner's earliest sitters; the great actress returned to town and took the world by storm at Drury Lane in 1782,



PORTRAIT OF A LADY

*Wallace Collection*



after six years wandering in the wilderness of the provinces, and it may well be that Hoppner painted her in this year in the first flush of her success. This was probably the portrait which changed hands in 1896 for 110 guineas. Subsequently, as we know, she was taken up by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and after that became the friend of Lawrence—who used her exceedingly ill—and we do not hear of her again patronising Hoppner, although a sketch of Miss Siddons was found among his effects after his death. It is probable, however, that this picture was not one of Hoppner's successes: it was not engraved, and Sandby alone of his biographers refers to it.

The Academy Exhibition of 1783 marks a still further advance. Five of Hoppner's pictures were accepted, and they included portraits of "A Lady of Quality," "A Nobleman," and "A Young Gentleman," besides an unknown "Lady" and "Gentleman." The "Lady of Quality" was, in all probability, the beautiful picture of the Countess of Mexborough, which has always been a favourite with the public in William Ward's fine engraving. The subject of it was Elizabeth (Stephenson), the Buckinghamshire heiress, who married John, second Earl of Mexborough, in September, 1782; and Hoppner lived to paint Lady Pollington, the wife of her eldest son, some twenty-five years later. The "Portrait of a Young Gentleman" is also important, as marking a distinct step forward in public esteem, being probably the charming likeness of young William

Locke, of Norbury Park, who in time became an amateur painter of quite respectable merit. His father was famous as one of the most discriminating and liberal art patrons and connoisseurs of the day, while Norbury Park was the resort of all that was best and most promising in art and letters. It was no small matter for a struggling artist to be noticed by so useful a patron. Young Mr. Locke was only eighteen when this picture was painted; it was evidently well esteemed, as it deserved to be, for Charles Townley's engraving of it was published in the following year. The picture is one of singular charm. On the break up of the household it passed into the possession of the Angersteins (Mrs. Angerstein was young Mr. Locke's sister), and it was ultimately sold in 1896 for £420. This was the young man of whom Northcote characteristically observed to Hazlitt—

“I remember when Mr. Locke, of Norbury Park, just came over from Italy; and old Dr. Moore, who had a high opinion of him, was crying up his doings, and asked me if I did not think he would make a great painter? I said, ‘No, never!’—‘Why not?’ ‘Because he has six thousand a year!’”

There is in the British Museum a pretty line engraving of a portrait by Hoppner of Mrs. Grace, wife of Richard Grace, M.P. for Boley, Queen's County, Ireland, whose children succeeded to the baronetcy of Grace of Grace Castle, Kilkenny, which must, from the costume, have been painted about this year. She was born in 1763, and this

picture was probably painted at the time of her marriage.

In 1784 Hoppner exhibited five pictures, and was hailed by the critics, along with Northcote and Opie, as "a young artist of the most promising abilities." Owing to the happy discovery of Henry Ramberg's water-colour views of the Academy Exhibition of that year, and with the help of Anderdon, it has been possible to identify all these, in spite of the exasperating etiquette of the day, which forbade publishing the names of subjects below the rank of royalty. The "Portrait of a Nobleman's Son" shows a handsome lad at full length, in uniform, standing bare-headed in a landscape, holding his sword and three-cornered hat in his hand: he is the Hon. Captain Beauclerk, probably Amelius, third son of Aubrey, fifth Duke of St. Albans, then a captain (men with interest were promoted young in that golden age), and afterwards a distinguished naval officer. The original picture is now at Bestwood Lodge. The "Portrait of a Gentleman," in an oval, and mercilessly "skied," was a Mr. Hall; the first "Lady of Quality" is said to be Lady Beauchamp, who afterwards blossomed into the Marchioness of Hertford, which on the necessarily reduced scale of Ramberg's sketch gives the impression of an exceedingly pretty half-length. It is hung well on the line in the centre of the room, and close by hangs the well-known "Sophia Western" of John Raphael Smith's engraving, which has always passed for a portrait of Mrs. Hoppner. It does not resemble

any other portraits of her, which are all characteristic and unmistakable; and it now appears that the lady was a Miss Sarah Anne Williams, whom Hoppner sketched surreptitiously, to the great disgust of her family. The second "Lady of Quality" is identified by Anderdon as Lady Talbot.

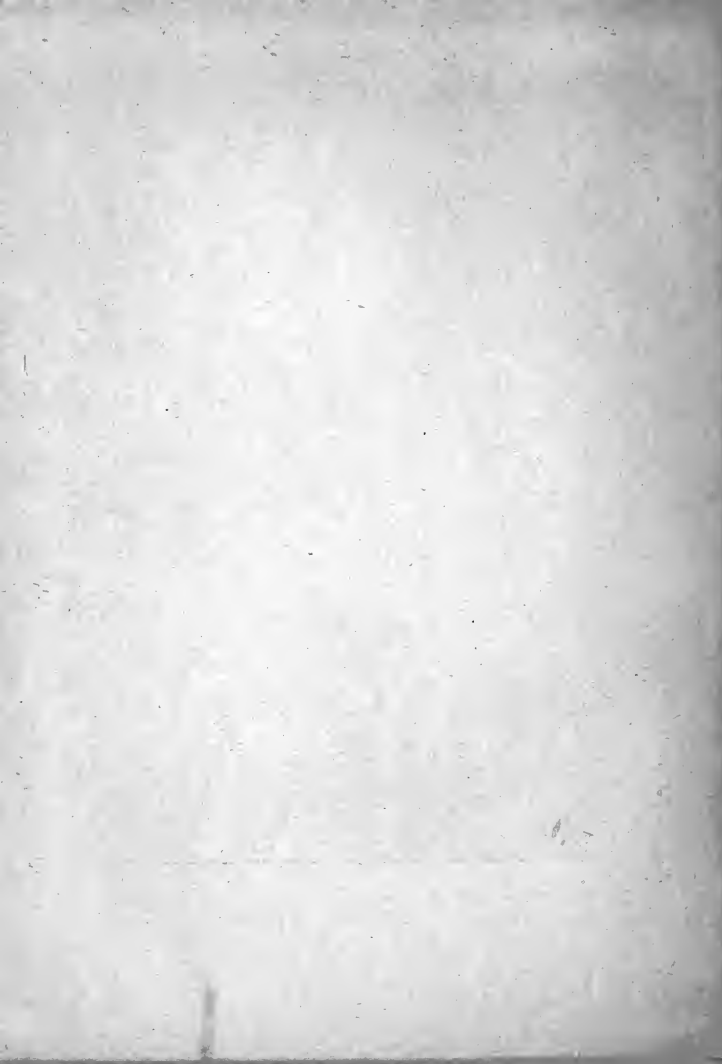
The beautiful picture of Catherine, Viscountess Hampden, which still hangs on the wainscoted walls of the old home of the family at Glynde, must have been painted about this time. Apart from its masterly technique this picture marks a distinct step forward in the broader treatment of costume, and there is a wistfulness and charm in the expression which displays Hoppner's genius at its best. It was engraved by John Young. We may also reasonably assign to this year the fine portrait of Edmund Ayrton, which was sold in 1903 for £131 5s., showing him in his scarlet robes as a Doctor of Music. Ayrton was a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal when Hoppner was a little lad in the choir; and in 1780 was himself appointed Master of the Children of the Royal Chapel. In this year he received the rare distinction of being elected a Doctor of Music simultaneously in both universities, and it would be nothing strange if he employed Hoppner to celebrate the occasion by painting him in his robes. The rich reds, which Hoppner could always handle to such good purpose, make the picture a very effective one.

The picture of "A Girl and Pigeons," engraved by H. Kingsbury in the autumn of this year, must





"INFANT VANITY"



have been painted about this time, or a little earlier. It shows a young girl—three-quarter length—seated on some rocks, with her hands on a basket containing pigeons; a sentimental little piece, by the disappearance of which the world of art is probably not much poorer. No later than this, too, must be a portrait of Mrs. Hoppner, untitled but unmistakable, of which there is a proof engraving by an anonymous artist in the British Museum, half-length, seated at a window in a low dress, with her hands in a muff, and a truly alarming *coiffure*. It is somewhat poor as a composition, especially in the sharp perspective in which the window is drawn, but as a likeness of Mrs. Hoppner it is interesting. In this year's achievement, too, we may include the pair of pictures "Pyramus" and "Thisbe," known to us in Knight and Nutter's engravings. They are distinctly in the Watteau vein, and "Pyramus" reflects the absurdities as well as the prettinesses of that school. "Thisbe," however, is a graceful and attractive figure, and with her surroundings makes a decidedly pretty picture.

This point may be taken to mark the end of such uphill work as Hoppner encountered at the beginning of his artistic career, and he may now be regarded as securely established. He had great competitors; Sir Joshua was in the height of his glory, and had been formally appointed Painter in Ordinary to the King in this very year, as a grudging concession to popular opinion; Gainsborough and Romney were doing some of their best work; the latter especially had, in an

artistic sense, found his fate some two years since in the beautiful Emma Hart, soon to play upon a greater stage as Lady Hamilton. Gainsborough had quarrelled with the Academy in this year, and henceforward busied himself with the *clientèle* which afterwards fell to Hoppner—the Prince of Wales, Sheridan, William Pitt, and Lady Mulgrave; but we hear nothing of any encouragement held out by the elder painters to the younger. Sir Joshua's latest biographer, however, speaks of the President being "always good-natured and helpful to young artists," and it may be that he showed some such kindness to Hoppner, for Hoppner always spoke of him with enthusiasm, and was certainly greatly influenced by his work. Hoppner had, it would seem, gained a reputation for painting pretty subjects in a way to do them justice, and perhaps something more; there were a play of fancy and an eye to nature in his pictures which were sufficiently novel to attract, although he could still stoop to perpetuate the vagaries of fashion with a minuteness of detail which wild horses would not have wrung from him in his later years. One must compare his picture of the Countess of Mexborough, with its wealth of flowers and furbelows, with the severe simplicity of Lady Charlotte Legge, painted eleven years later, to appreciate the change which came over his art in this respect.

No doubt, too, that royal patronage and favour were still his. In the following year, as we shall see, he was permitted to paint the por-

traits of three princesses, and his settlement in the immediate neighbourhood of Carlton House, when that residence was bestowed upon the Prince of Wales in 1784, was probably due to his friendship with the Prince, to whom he was formally appointed Portrait Painter five years later. Lawrence had not yet made his *début*, and, to all appearance, Hoppner's succession to the thrones occupied by the giants of the elder generation was assured.

## CHAPTER III

### CONTINUED PROSPERITY

1785-1786

1785 a prosperous year—Portraits of the Royal Princesses—"Eliza" from *Yorrick*—"Neæra"—"Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse"—Its detractors—"Julia de Roubigné"—Loss of favour at Court—The first appearance of Lawrence—An anecdote from Rogers—Birth of Helen Clarence Hoppner and Catherine Hampden Hoppner—Also of Richard Belgrave Hoppner—The intimacy with Gifford—"The Show"—Praise from the critics.

THE year 1785 may be counted one of Hoppner's most prosperous years. Sir Joshua Reynolds had been appointed Painter-in-Ordinary to the King, in succession to Allan Ramsay, in the year preceding; but his office was in practice a sinecure, and it fell to Hoppner's lot during this year to paint three royal princesses, Mary, Amelia, and Sophia, the daughters of the King. All three portraits are now in the Royal Collection. They are pretty pictures, though time has marred them somewhat, and they furnish the earliest indications that survive of Hoppner's special gift for interpreting children upon canvas. His earlier manner is evident in the elaborate details of the costume of the two elder princesses, and the minuteness with which the fashionable fripperies



MRS. GWYN





of the day are reproduced; but the picture of the little two-year-old Princess Amelia, with the spaniel lying at her feet, is simplicity itself, and the baby face and big eyes are well and sympathetically caught. It hangs now in a bedroom at St. James's Palace. The pictures of the two elder princesses were engraved in stipple by Caroline Watson, and published in the same year. All three were exhibited in the Academy of 1785, and the pictures of the Princesses Mary and Sophia were shown at the Paris Exhibition, 1901. Hoppner also painted the Princess Royal, Charlotte, afterwards Queen of Würtemberg, about this time, but not apparently as a royal commission, for the picture was sold out of the William Crawford Collection in 1900 for 76 guineas, and again in 1903 for 140 guineas. It does not show Hoppner at his best.

The Academy Exhibition contained three other pictures by Hoppner—a "Jupiter and Io," a "Portrait of a Gentleman," and a "Primrose Girl." The subject of the "Portrait of a Gentleman" cannot be identified with certainty, but it may have been that of the Rev. John Jebb, a remarkable man, who was entitled to add the letters M.D., F.R.S., to his name. He was rector of Ovington, Norfolk, and chaplain to the Earl of Harborough, and died in 1786, so that his portrait must have been painted about this time. The fact that it was engraved by John Young shows, at all events, that it was regarded as a picture of some note. The "Jupiter and Io" is said to have been a half-length, and therefore

cannot be identical with a picture of the same subject engraved in colour by Valentine Green in 1798, the original of which was said to be in possession of Lord Hampden. The "Primrose Girl" was probably another of the numerous portraits of Mrs. Hoppner.

In January of this year J. Kingsbury published his engraving entitled "'Eliza' from *Yorrick*," after a fine portrait of Mrs. Hoppner, in black and red chalks, the original drawing for which is in the British Museum. Another chalk study of Mrs. Hoppner was shown at the exhibition of drawings and sketches by old masters in the British Museum, 1902. The picture which Hoppner afterwards painted of "Eliza," engraved under that title by John Young in 1786, was a portrait of Mrs. Young. It shows a handsome woman, with powdered hair, leaning her head on her hand, and looking out of a window overhung with vine leaves, the accessories being similar to those in "Nature," published in 1794. About this time, too, he must have painted the "Clara at the Tomb of Eloisa," a not very striking work, and only noteworthy for the landscape background. Mrs. Hoppner figures as Clara.

Of the five pictures exhibited by Hoppner in the Academy Exhibition of 1786, two only, those of Captain E. Lloyd and of Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse, can be positively identified. Of the former nothing further is known. About this time, however, the portrait of a lady, engraved and published two years later by John Young as "Neæra," was probably painted, and if, as it has been sur-

mised by Chaloner Smith, this subject was the notorious Amy Lyon, *alias* Emma Hart, afterwards Lady Hamilton, it could not have been painted later than this year, as she left England for an absence of five years in March, 1786. It is not impossible, therefore, and far from unlikely, that this picture was the three-quarter-length "Portrait of a Lady" shown by Hoppner in the Academy Exhibition of that year. The picture is a fine one, but does not suggest strongly the Lady Hamilton of Romney's pictures. This, however, need be no bar to its identity, for Lady Hamilton was very variously rendered by different artists. Her charm seems to have been more in movement than in repose, and Romney alone of that generation really succeeded in catching the evanescent witcheries of expression and movement in women and children. In the works of his contemporaries, from Sir Joshua downwards, the suggestion of pose is never absent in pictures intended to represent movement; but in Romney's work it is seldom or never obtruded, and herein lay no small part of his greatness.

The picture of Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse—its full title is "Mrs. Jordan in the character of the Comic Muse, supported by Euphrosyne, who represses the advances of a Satyr"—was probably a royal commission from the Duke of Clarence. It is and has been for many years in the Royal Collection. At the outset it was greatly praised, and people did not hesitate to term it a work of genius. Allan Cunningham, writing as late as 1830, says that "the work was much liked."

Then there set in for it an era of depreciation. The critics were not content to let it hang unregarded at Hampton Court, but they also abused it roundly. The present generation will probably reverse these unfavourable verdicts unequivocally. Since the accession of the King, this picture, with others of Hoppner's masterpieces, has been carefully cleaned and cared for, and now hangs, appearing to splendid advantage, in one of the ante-chambers of Buckingham Palace. In the words of a high authority, dirt and neglect were all that was the matter with it, and it is now seen to be a beautiful composition, rich and mellow in colouring, not bad in grouping, while the features of Mrs. Jordan, which, to judge from Romney's comparative failure to do so, were most difficult to catch, are beautifully rendered. Hoppner painted Mrs. Jordan again five years later with still greater success, and on another occasion as Rosalind. Meanwhile it was some tribute to his growing reputation that he was able to secure sittings from this beautiful woman in the heyday of her fame, as she then was. Dorothy Bland, who preferred to be known as Mrs. Jordan, came to town in the preceding October, being then in her twenty-third year. She was a woman of extraordinary charm, which must have increased rather than diminished with the lapse of time, for although she had already captivated the Duke of Clarence—it was for him that Romney painted his picture of her as "The Romp" in *The Country Girl*—four more years elapsed before he made her his mistress, a position which she held for twenty-



MRS. BUNBURY ("LITTLE COMEDY")



one years; and a year later Hoppner painted her a second time to splendid purpose as "Hypolita." Her children were ennobled after her death with the earldom of Munster, which is still held by the Fitzclarences, but she herself died abroad in poverty.

Of the other pictures exhibited by Hoppner in 1786 nothing certain is known. They were a picture entitled "Youth and Age" and a "Portrait of a Lady." The latter, indeed, may have been the portrait of Miss Crockatt, afterwards Mrs. A. Boucherett, which attained considerable popularity in J. Dean's engraving under the title of "Julia de Roubigné," the heroine of a fashionable novel of the day. Against this theory is to be set the fact that the engraving was published in the January of this year, that is to say, before the picture had been exhibited. In a subsequent instance, however, the publication of an engraving certainly preceded the exhibition of the original picture; that of "Caroline de Lichtfield," for instance, was published in the December preceding the appearance of the original on the walls of the Royal Academy. Of Miss Crockatt's picture it may be said that it is decidedly pretty, and that its popularity is quite intelligible. But its whereabouts is now unknown, and our acquaintance with it is through the engraving only.

It is probable that Hoppner lost favour at St. James's about this time; according to one story, on account of his imprudent championship of the art of Sir Joshua Reynolds, according to

another, through the ill offices of West; while it is quite likely that his growing intimacy with the Prince of Wales, who was ere this at daggers drawn with his father and the Court, did something to accelerate the rupture. But no further commissions came from St. James's, and in 1789 Hoppner appears in the Academy Catalogue as "Portrait Painter to the Prince of Wales." In 1787, too, Lawrence made his first appearance on the walls of the Academy; he succeeded in attracting Court favour from the first, of course to the detriment of Hoppner. Samuel Rogers used to relate an anecdote of this time or a little earlier, which bears repetition. It is to be found in Dyce's *Table-talk of Samuel Rogers*.

"He (Hoppner) had his good qualities. He had been a singing-boy at Windsor, and was consequently allowed 'the run of the royal kitchen'; but some time after his marriage (and, it was supposed, through the ill offices of West) that favour was withdrawn; and in order to conceal the matter from his wife, who, he knew, would be greatly vexed at it, Hoppner occasionally, after secretly pocketing a roll to dine upon, would go out for the day, and on his return pretend that he had been dining at Windsor."

Another candid opinion expressed by a venomous, but not wholly incompetent critic, Anthony Pasquin (John Williams), some ten years later, may find a place here:—

"When Mr. Hoppner first painted, I conceived but a very limited hope of his success; he appeared to have much confidence with little ability,



and his excessive vanity superseded his puny judgment : he laboured to surpass all at a period when he could rival none, and thought the charitable praise of Mr. Henry Bunbury was equal to all the advantages resulting from the most mature and envied renown ! ”

Of Anthony Pasquin we shall have more to say anon, but there must have been little to the discredit of a man against whom his enemy, for such Pasquin was, could find no graver charge to bring than this. The picture which these words convey of an eager, hot-headed lad, ambitious, with a good conceit of his own powers, and fully determined to succeed in his art, is to us wholly attractive. One does not augur ill of the youth who “labours to surpass all at a period when he can rival none,” and the more widely such ideals are diffused among a rising generation, one would say, the better.

Before this time Hoppner had had two children born to him ; the elder, a daughter, Helen Clarence, so named after and at the request of the Duke of Clarence, who stood godfather to her ; and the younger, a son, Catherine Hampden, probably godson to Lady Hampden, whose name was Catherine, the lady whose portrait Hoppner painted, as we have seen, in 1784. In 1787 another son was born, Richard Belgrave, to be known in after times as the trusted friend and better angel of Lord Byron. His name at this point marks for us the fact that Hoppner was now intimate with Lord Belgrave, the pupil of William Gifford, by whom Hoppner had been introduced

into the Grosvenor circle, in which he continued to the end of his life.

When and how Gifford and Hoppner first met is not known, but the friendship then formed was ended only by death. Their careers, according to Gifford, had been somewhat similar, and both had reached honourable positions after a hard and seemingly hopeless struggle, Hoppner's having been, according to Gifford, the more uphill battle of the two. Gifford was a hard fighter, who knew how to inflict wounds which could never be forgotten nor forgiven, and there was never a time when he had not a flourishing crop of enemies on hand, who exercised to the full his exceptional powers of acidulated controversy. For the fair fame of our literature it is to be hoped that there are few lampoons to be placed in the same category as those upon Gifford by Peter Pindar and Anthony Pasquin; and it is to his credit that he held his own with the one and vanquished utterly the other of these redoubtable antagonists. Hoppner, too, had a very pretty gift in this direction, and his friendship with Gifford was the signal for a quarrel into which he was soon dragged, a quarrel which must have influenced his future in no small measure, though it is impossible now directly to trace its effects.

William Gifford—the future founder and editor of *The Quarterly Review*—had been left an orphan at twelve, he had served at sea as a cabin-boy, and later for four years as a shoemaker's apprentice at Ashburton until he was nineteen, when his attempts at versification attracted notice, and



MRS. JORDAN AS "HYPOLITA"



means were found to send him to Exeter College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1782. There he met with that singular person, the Rev. Matthew William Peters, Royal Academician, and priest of the Anglican Church, then acting as governor to Lord Belgrave. According to Peters and his friends, Peters introduced Gifford to the youthful peer, and Gifford repaid the kindness by ousting Peters from his post and procuring it for himself. Pasquin damns both parties with strict impartiality, not to say scurrility, and Dr. John Wolcot, better known to posterity as Peter Pindar, paints Gifford in the blacker colours. What followed can best be told in the words of Tom Taylor :—

“Gifford had become acquainted with Mr. Hoppner, the painter, and had introduced him at Grosvenor House. This circumstance must have displeased Peters, who knew that Hoppner was of a very satirical turn and spared nobody. . . . Gifford was accused by Peters of having, in a public newspaper, ridiculed his pictures in a Royal Academy Exhibition, assisted by the professional suggestions of Hoppner. I remember to have read a critique of this description, on a picture of Adam and Eve in paradise, which was remarkably humorous and severe.”

One can well believe this part of the story, and also that the victim was not likely to forget his injuries. We should like to come upon this critique, which would, beyond a doubt, prove a substantial addition to the gaiety of nations. But the effect could not have been in the

direction of smoothing Hoppner's path: it was not the kind of mistake that West or Lawrence would have committed, or even Sir Joshua, and one could wish, for his own sake, that in this and other matters Hoppner had acted differently. But the best reply would be that had he done so, he would not have been John Hoppner, the sensitive, impulsive, high-spirited man whom we know.

We should assign to this period the "Portrait of an Actress," exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1875, and at the Guelph Exhibition, 1891, by the late G. P. Boyce. It is a life-size half-length, and the style is that of Hoppner's earlier work. The subject has not been identified. Another early work, too, is probably the "Portrait of a Lady" in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House. The style is evidently modelled upon that of Reynolds, and the dress is not so simple as that which Hoppner preferred for his sitters in later works. On the other hand, the finish and beauty of the rich woodland landscape in the background would suggest a later date. In this, too, the subject has not been identified. A picture which is expressly dated this year (1786) is that of Lady Boughton, who married Sir Charles Rouse-Boughton in 1782, which was sold in 1891 for £388. No description is given, and none is available. The Rouse-Boughtons are an old Warwickshire family, and Lady Boughton herself was a Miss Catherine Hall, of Downton, Salop. She had been married four years previous to the painting of this portrait. Some twenty years later

Hoppner painted her daughter, Lady St. John of Bletsoe, about the time of her marriage.

"The Show," as it is termed on Young's engraving, is an important picture, which must have been painted this year or very early in 1787, as the engraving was published in June of the latter year. A showman stands with a box on a stand, into which a little boy is looking, behind him is a girl waiting her turn, and on the right a young woman with a child in her arms, in the background trees and a cottage. It is, in all probability, a companion to Beechey's "Gipsy Fortune-teller," the engraving of which was dedicated to the Duchess of Devonshire, and the figures are portraits of Lady Duncannon, a sister of the duchess, and her children, one of whom Hoppner painted again some twenty years later as Lady Caroline Lamb. The engraving is dedicated to Lady Duncannon, and the arms of Bessborough and Spencer are duly impaled below. The original is now in Lord Duncannon's possession. Both Lady Duncannon and her sister were daughters of John, first Earl Spencer; the sister was the "Beautiful Duchess" of Gainsborough's masterpiece; Lady Duncannon herself was a famous beauty, and her beauty is very apparent in this picture. The portrait of the showman is delightfully humorous, and those of the children indicate a considerable advance of Hoppner's powers in this branch of art. The landscape, too, is one of the most ambitious that he had yet attempted, at least so far as there is any record to show. The picture is, in short, a fine one, and it is

difficult to understand why it did not find a place in the Royal Academy Exhibition, but that is a question which has been asked about more than one fine picture since. A sketch of the "Beautiful Duchess" by Hoppner, it may be added, is in existence, the fortunate possessor being Colonel Harold Malet, who exhibited it at the Grafton Galleries in 1894.

A contemporary critic, writing of the Academy Exhibition of 1787, thus expresses himself:—

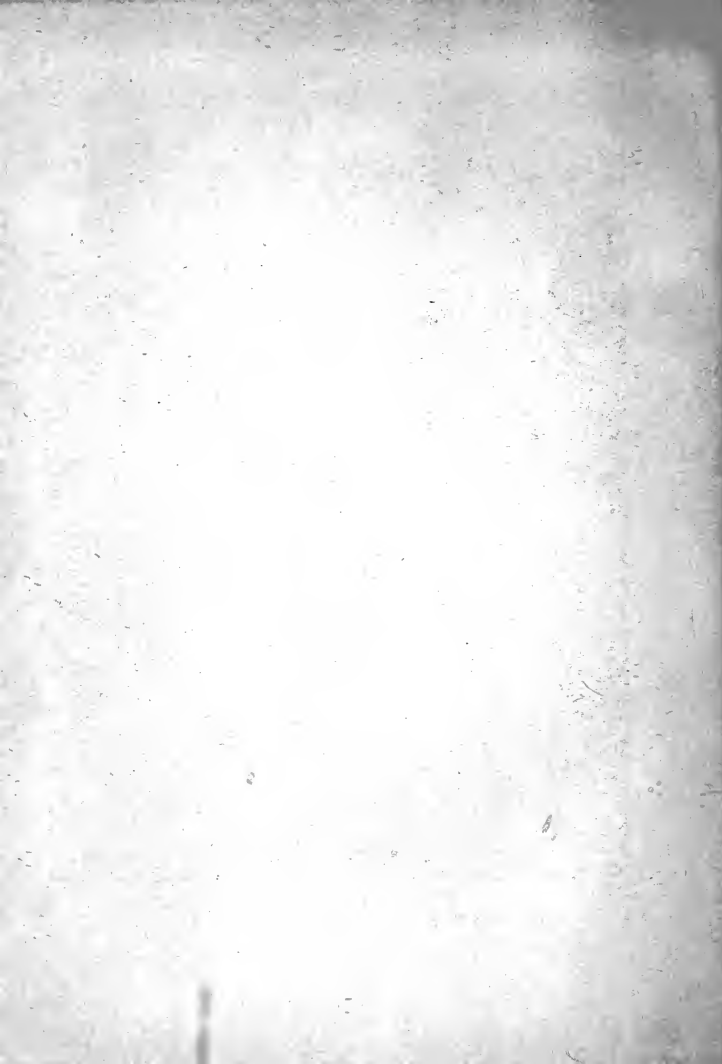
"HOPPNER—gets business and deserves it. *Second-rate*, next to *Reynolds*, *Romney*, and *Stuart*,—there is not on the whole, perhaps, any portrait painter between. In proof of this are the heads of *Sir Matthew Ridley*, *Mrs. Crouch*, and *Mrs. Gale*. In the rate below these *Lady Lewisham* and *Miss Finch*, the daughter of *Lady Charlotte*. And not below them, some parts of the large picture of *Lady Duncannon* and her two children "

Stuart, whom *The World* in the following year termed "a Portrait Painter fit to be mentioned even with Sir Joshua," is forgotten; but this passage is of use in fixing the date of some of Hoppner's pictures, as well as his estimation by the public. The portrait of Sir Matthew Ridley was engraved by Fittler two years later; that of Mrs. Crouch is probably the one which changed hands in 1887 for £44; a recent engraver has tried his hand upon the lovely profile of Mrs. Gale; Lady Lewisham, the young wife of George, Viscount Lewisham, afterwards third Earl of Dartmouth, was, perhaps, painted upon her marriage in 1782 or soon after; the Miss Finch





THE SONS OF JOHN HOPPNER ("CHILDREN BATHING")



must have been a sister of Mrs. Fielding, whose portrait and her daughters' Hoppner painted in the following year ; the "Lady Charlotte" being Lady Charlotte Finch, *née* Fermor, daughter of the Earl of Pomfret. Her portrait may still be in possession of the family.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RISE OF LAWRENCE

1787-1790

1787—"Caroline de Lichtfield"—Faulty drawing fashionable—Ramberg's engraving of the Royal Academy, 1787—The Fielding portraits—First impressions of Lawrence—A courtier and "ladies' man"—William Smith—1789, Portrait Painter to the Prince of Wales—Lord Henry Fitzgerald—The Godsall children—1790, Mrs. Bunbury and Mrs. Gwyn—J. M. W. Turner in boyhood.

IN the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1787 Hoppner showed four pictures, of which only one is known certainly to be in existence. This is the three-quarter length "Portrait of a Lady," which is familiar to us all in Dean's engraving, published in the December preceding the exhibition, entitled, after a character in one of the popular novels of the day, "Caroline de Lichtfield." The identity of this picture is established by Ramberg's engraving of a Royal Visit to the Exhibition of that year, in which it figures unmistakably on the wall opposite to the spectator. It is a portrait of Mrs. Hoppner, and one of the prettiest of them. The picture is in the artist's early and somewhat florid style, but it is very effective with pearl-grey dress and pink ribbons, and is still popular in its engraved form. The

arms are imperfectly drawn, a fashionable defect which is frequently observable in Hoppner's work, as in that of most of his contemporaries from Sir Joshua downwards. The original picture was exhibited by Mr. James Christie at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1891, and is probably identical with one which changed hands the year previously for £829. Another effective picture shown by Hoppner this year was "Belisarius," "an old man broken by the storms of fortune," which was engraved by John Young; the original is lost, but the engraving survives to show what Hoppner could have done had he chosen to devote himself to this kind of work.

Hoppner exhibited besides in this year's exhibition a whole-length "Portrait of a Lady" and a "Portrait of a Gentleman," three-quarter length—a Mrs. Boyd and a Rev. Mr. Carr—but the pictures cannot now be traced. In Ramberg's engraving, however, we get a sketch of the former, a graceful figure with powdered hair and low-necked white dress, which suggests a fine picture.

To this same year—the year of her marriage—we may assign the portrait of Elizabeth, Countess of Carysfort, a pretty half-length, which was shown by Lord Carysfort at the Royal Academy Old Masters Exhibition in 1881. The half-length portrait of Mrs. Sophia Fielding is dated this year, and the companion portraits of her two daughters, Matilda and Augusta, may have been painted about the same time. These three pictures changed hands in 1896 for £346 10s.,

£1,550, and £504 respectively, and the first-named was disposed of three months later in the same year for £367 10s. The portrait of Miss Matilda Fielding is known as "The Hurdy-Gurdy Player," and represents a pretty girl in peasant costume, with broad-brimmed hat tied with pink ribbons, playing a guitar-shaped "hurdy-gurdy"—altogether a graceful and charming composition, which ranks high among Hoppner's works. Mrs. Fielding is represented in a white dress with muslin tippet and large blue hat and feathers, and Miss Augusta Fielding in a white dress, straw hat lined and trimmed with pink ribbon, holding a pug dog in her arms. Her picture is dated 1788. It is to be noted that Mrs. Fielding—whose parents were the Right Hon. W. Finch, Vice-Chamberlain to George II., and Lady Charlotte Fermor, governess to the children of George III., while she herself was married to Captain Charles Fielding, R.N., and sister to the Miss Finch whom Hoppner had already painted—was a chamber-woman to Queen Charlotte. This circumstance might militate against the supposition that Hoppner had lost his Court influence before this time; but it does not necessarily do so, and would, in any case, postpone his loss of favour at Court by a year or two only. He had been definitely taken up by the Prince of Wales in 1789, and the doors of St. James's must have been closed to him before that happened.

Besides the "Belisarius," Hoppner made another excursion this year upon, for him, untrodden ground in the portrait of Richard



LADY CHARLOTTE LEGGE





Humphreys, the celebrated boxer, whose boast it was that he had never been conquered. The pugilist is represented at full length, stripped to the waist, in the orthodox fighting attitude, with a background of wild moorland, which might stand for Mousehold Heath, immortalised of George Borrow. The picture, in fact, is just one to have delighted that doughty singer of the prize-ring—as it very likely did. It is magnificently virile, there are a balance and suppleness in the pose, and a suggestion of muscular strength in the well-knit frame, which command immediate respect; while the likeness, to judge from other extant portraits of the same worthy, is very exact. Hoppner included, as we know, an effective knowledge of the art of self-defence in his sufficiently varied stock of accomplishments, and this picture is evidence of the fact, if any were needed. The inscription upon John Young's fine mezzotint informs us that the picture was painted for Wilson Braddyll, Esq., the husband of Sir Joshua's Mrs. Braddyll, whom Hoppner also painted; but it was until lately in possession of Sir Wroth Lethbridge, by whom it was exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1878. Since then it has drifted, with others, to America.

The year 1787 was memorable to Hoppner as that in which Thomas Lawrence came to town, and made his *début* by showing seven pictures in the exhibition of the Royal Academy. He was ten years younger than Hoppner, and was now only eighteen years of age, exceedingly good-looking, while he had already attracted notice as

"the wondrous boy painter." He was clever and ambitious, but withal, as Allan Cunningham observes, too knowing and prudent to challenge comparison with the favourites of the day before he had first made sure of his ground. His fellow-student, Martin Archer Shee, afterwards his successor in the presidential chair, describes him in 1789 as "a very genteel, handsome young man, but rather effeminate in manner"; he was wont to recite Milton to his brother artists "with a softness of voice and gentleness of manner, 'very much,' as Fuseli said, 'like Belial, but *deucedly unlike Beelzebub.*'" In later years, however, Fuseli ranked Lawrence's female portraits above those of Vandyck, and Lawrence returned the compliment—or possibly evoked it—by classing Fuseli's achievements with those of Michael Angelo. He began the world in debt, and, in spite of his enormous professional gains, remained so all his life. Hoppner's famous remark in after years, that "the ladies of Lawrence showed a gaudy dissoluteness of taste and sometimes trespassed on moral as well as professional chastity," was curiously anticipated at the outset of Lawrence's career by Reynolds, who, on examining some of his early female portraits, is said to have remarked "that they were deficient in the meek and modest composure which belongs to the loftier order of female expression," and, according to Allan Cunningham, "hazarded a doubt whether this fault would not adhere to him." In less than a year Lawrence had effected a lodgment in the Court, it is not

known how, for, as the same biographer remarks, "no one imputed it to the sense which the King could entertain of his merit, since His Majesty had long rejected Reynolds." He was a born courtier and "ladies' man," well aware of the value of judicious—and even injudicious—flirtation, and nothing is to be gained by inquiring too curiously into the ways of such. But in 1788 he was able to exhibit portraits of the Queen and the Princess Amelia; and his position, which was probably gained at the expense of Hoppner, was assured. Thus there began the twenty-two years' rivalry, which terminated with the death of Hoppner, apparently in favour of the younger man. Time has emphatically reversed that verdict, but the remainder of Hoppner's life was constantly embittered by the success of one who was as inferior to him in art as he excelled him in the instincts of the courtier and the cult of the petticoat.

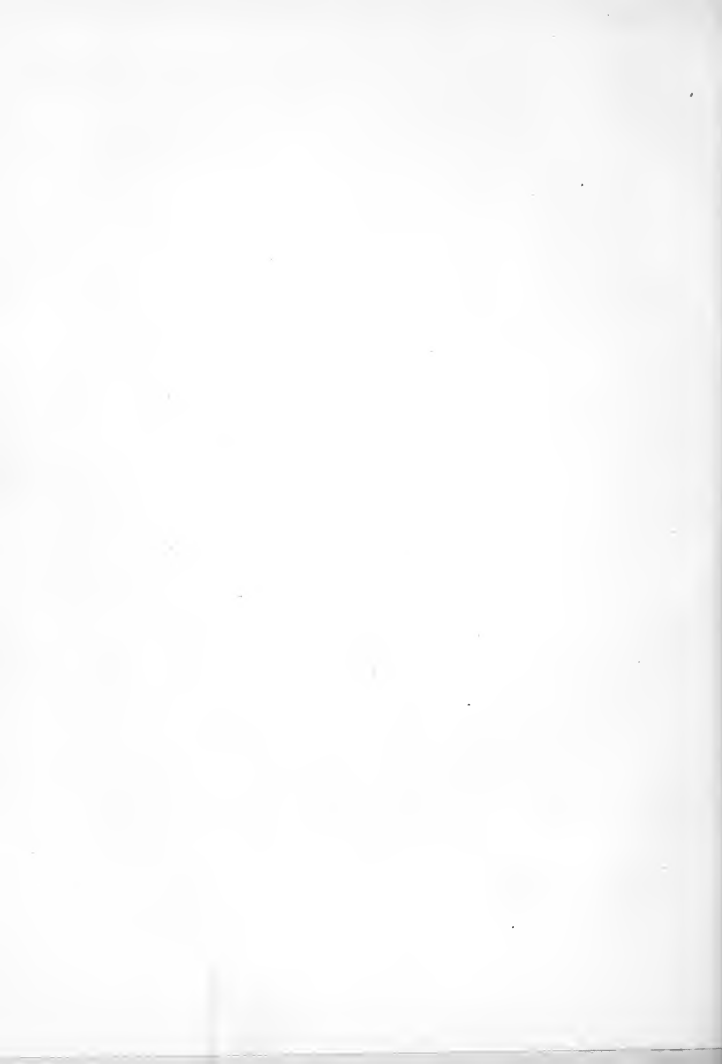
The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1788 found Hoppner showing five pictures against Lawrence's six. The identification of all these is difficult, if not impossible. His fancy picture of "A Standard-bearer" is known to us only from Ramberg's water-colour, in which it appears very much "skied," showing a man in armour, bareheaded, holding in his right hand the staff of a banner, only a portion of which is shown. The "Portrait of a Lady—whole-length," is said to be that of Mrs. Braddyll, who had sat to Sir Joshua for the celebrated picture now in Hertford House in the January of this same year. Ramberg's sketch shows a slim figure in a dark flowing dress,

with light under-skirt, close-fitting bodice, and plumed hat, standing at the bottom of a flight of steps in a garden, with one foot advanced and one hand on the balustrade. The "Portrait of a Nobleman" is that of John, third Duke of Roxburghe, well known in his day as a book collector. The other "Portrait of a Lady" was a Mrs. Tolfrey. To this year may be assigned the fine half-length of Miss Coussmaker, still owned by her descendants, a brilliant example of Hoppner's work in this style, both as regards character and technique. The picture of "A Nymph" may be—though there is little evidence to support the conjecture—the "Mrs. Gibson as a Wood Nymph," belonging to Mr. Frederick Davis, and exhibited by him at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1885. It is a pretty picture, if this be the one; a half-length figure in a low white dress, with a characteristic landscape background. A sketch for this picture was found among Hoppner's effects after his death. The early undated portraits of Fox and Burke may well be assigned to this period, the year of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, in which they bore so prominent a part. About this year, too, Hoppner must have painted that worthy connoisseur, Mr. Batt of New Hall, Salisbury, and his wife, whose portraits were torn from their ancient home and parted in the sale-room in 1901.

The splendid, but terribly uncompromising, portrait of William Smith, the actor, commonly known as "Gentleman" Smith, which now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, is said to have



THE CHILDREN OF THE HON. J. DOUGLAS



been painted in 1788, and may have been exhibited in 1789. William Smith was the black sheep of a good family; educated at Eton and Cambridge and expelled from the latter place, he made his mark on the stage in fashionable parts, and was the original Charles Surface in 1777. By dint of two good marriages he wriggled himself into a position of comparative wealth, in spite of occasional scandals, which added zest to his life. It is evident that Hoppner had no high opinion of him, and one would like to know what Smith himself thought of the unpleasantly expressive portrait.

To this year also belongs the portrait of Sir Matthew White Ridley, a strong half-length, which anticipates the numerous portraits of this type that followed. It was engraved by Fittler and published in February, 1788; but it is not impossible—and, as we have before shown, there would have been precedent in favour of the supposition—that it was exhibited in 1789, in spite of the fact that the date of the painting is expressly noted as 1788 on the engraving. In May of this year, too, S. Einslie published his engraving after the portrait of Anne Elizabeth, Countess of Aldborough, which must have been painted about now. It is a half-length, somewhat in the artist's earlier style, with powdered hair, wide hat looped up with feathers, upright frill round neck, ribbons at breast, and curtain and landscape background, somewhat suggestive of the picture of the Countess of Mexborough. We have not succeeded in tracing the original picture.

In the Royal Academy Catalogue for 1789 Hoppner appears for the first time as "Portrait Painter to the Prince of Wales," exhibiting six pictures against Lawrence's thirteen. The two "portraits of gentlemen" are unidentified, though one of them might well be Mr. Edward Lascelles, afterwards Viscount Lascelles, whom he painted about now. The "Portrait of a Nobleman" is most likely the fine half-length of Lord Henry Fitzgerald, made up for the part of Don Felix in *The Wonder*, which he had played in the Duke of Richmond's theatricals in the previous year. The picture shows a handsome young man, picturesquely attired, and is an exceedingly pleasing work; it has been effectively engraved by Thomas Park. The original belongs to Lord de Ros, who exhibited it at Dublin in 1902. Nothing is certainly known of the picture entitled "A Bacchante" beyond the possible allusion by Allan Cunningham:—

"Another was a lady of quality shadowed forth under the no very flattering name of a Bacchante; but as the colours were glowing, and the face lovely, the audacity of the name might be forgiven."

Sir Walter Armstrong, writing in *The English Illustrated Magazine* (1889), conjectures that this was possibly identical with "a charming semi-nude which was sold at Christie's some weeks ago as a Romney." But there are no means of verifying the conjecture, and against it must be set the fact that a Bacchante by Hoppner, which had originally been in Lord Londesborough's



collection, was sold in 1896, seven years after Sir Walter Armstrong's conjecture, for £220. "Infant Vanity," which was shown in this exhibition, is a perfectly delightful study of childhood, simple, natural, and humorous, in Hoppner's most winning style, which has long been a favourite in John Young's engraving. The models for it were in all probability the artist's own children, whose relative ages at this time would have been just about those of the children in this picture, the girl being the elder of the two, while the smaller child bears a strong family likeness to one of the children in the well-known portrait of the Hoppner children, painted some years later. Of the original of this picture we can find no trace.

The "Portraits of a Young Lady and two Children" is a group of the Godsall children, of the family from Iscoyd, Flintshire, now in possession of Mr. Pierpont Morgan. It is a very fine work, as all can testify who were so fortunate as to see it at a recent exhibition at Messrs. Agnew's. A lady kneels on the left of the picture, her right arm supporting a little girl, who shades her eyes with her left hand from the brilliant glow of the setting sun, which pours across the distant mountains and floods the intervening valley with golden light. The lady points with her right hand to the sun, which is still just visible, and a little lad stands opposite to her, with his back to the light and directly facing the spectator, a bright little boy-face such as few besides Hoppner could express satisfactorily on canvas. In spite of the somewhat doubtful lighting, which, indeed,

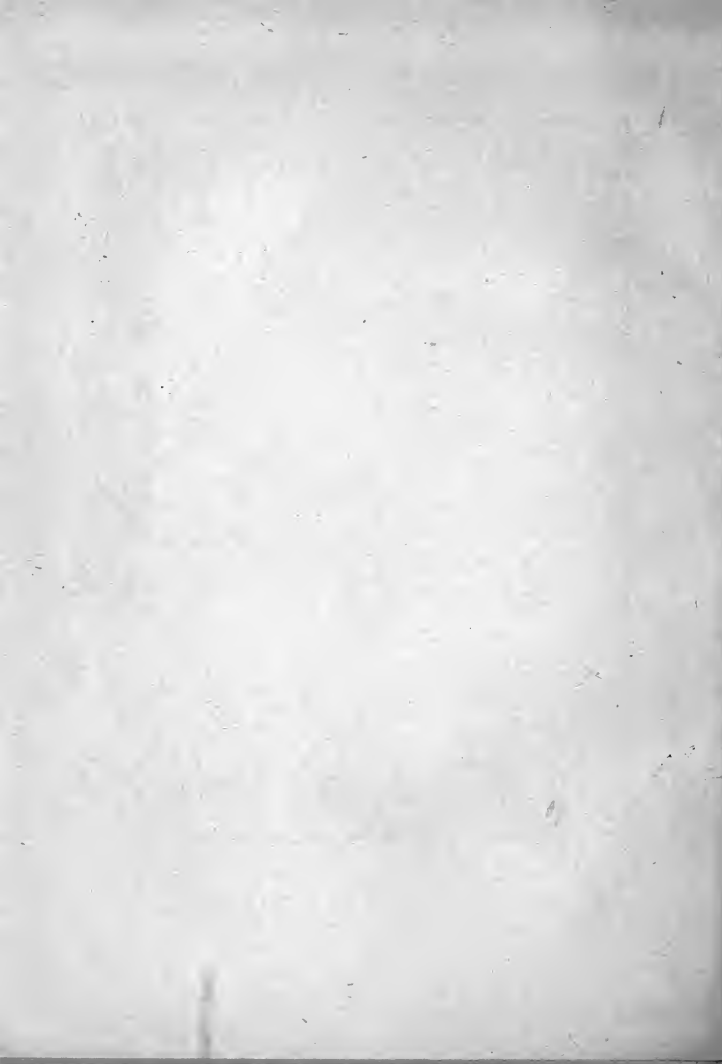
was in some measure inevitable in the circumstances, the whole composition is full of quiet beauty, and impresses one more than ever with Hoppner's real power. The picture was engraved by John Young, and published in 1790.

In the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1790 Hoppner showed three pictures only, against Lawrence's twelve; two "portraits of ladies" and one "Portrait of a Girl." The reason for this disparity does not appear, for at that time Hoppner's superiority to Lawrence was not seriously questioned, and he was undoubtedly doing good work. Court favour was in all probability the determining factor in the preference shown to Lawrence by the Hanging Committee of the year, and in the infancy of the Royal Academy it certainly counted for a great deal more than it would do now. The committee could not have included a single name of real eminence; Sir Joshua had just resigned his presidency, Gainsborough was dead, and Romney had not been admitted—perhaps it would be more accurate to say had not sought admission—into the charmed circle. The Academicians of that day would be astonished if they could know how completely they and their works are now forgotten. The trivial prettinesses of Angelica Kauffmann are practically all that now survives of their achievement in the public eye. The phenomenon is not novel, and there is every likelihood of its being repeated.

The two ladies whose portraits were then exhibited were Mrs. Bunbury and Mrs. Gwyn,



THE DAUGHTERS OF SIR THOMAS FRANKLAND



better known to an earlier generation as the beautiful Misses Horneck ; who figure on the canvases of Sir Joshua, as their mother, a famous Plymouth beauty in her day, had done before them. Sir Joshua had lived to paint a third generation of the family in the person of " Master Bunbury," the son of the elder of the two girls. The family—consisting of Mrs. Horneck, widow of Captain Kane Horneck, of the Royal Engineers, her daughters, Catherine and Mary, and their brother, an officer in the Guards—were close friends of Goldsmith ; he had travelled with them abroad, he had celebrated the girls in verse as " Little Comedy " and the " Jessamy Bride " respectively, and gossip had coupled his name with the latter in a fashion which moved him to castigate, or attempt to castigate, the author of the libel, an escapade which cost him fifty pounds in damages for the assault. It is recorded that after Goldsmith's death the sisters pleaded so hard for locks of their old friend's hair that the coffin was opened to comply with their request. Mrs. Gwyn retained her lock until her death. Catherine, the elder daughter, was born in 1750, and married, in 1771, Henry William Bunbury, the artist, who, according to Pasquin, befriended Hoppner in his early days. Henry Bunbury was the younger brother of the Suffolk baronet who married the lovely Lady Sarah Lennox, whom George III. had desired to make his queen, and whom Sir Joshua so inappropriately painted as sacrificing to the Graces. Mrs. Bunbury was Goldsmith's " Little Comedy " ; she died in 1800. Much of her

roguish beauty still survives in Hoppner's picture, painted in her fortieth year. Her sister, Mary, the friend of Fanny Burney, was the "Jessamy Bride"; she married General Francis E. Gwyn, equerry to George III., and lived until 1840. The original portrait of her by Hoppner is now in the collection of Sir Charles Tennant. The two pictures were evidently intended to be a pair; they were engraved by John Young, and published on the same day, and both are charming.

The "Portrait of a Girl" exhibited at the same time cannot be identified. But another portrait painted about this time is that of Miss Maria Bover, daughter of Captain Bover, of Warrington, now only known through Caroline Watson's engraving, published in the September of this year. It shows a pretty woman at half-length, but its general style is somewhat florid. The portrait of the Countess of Aylesford, shown at the National Portrait Exhibition, 1868, is dated this year; and about now, too, the portrait of Maria, Lady Trevelyan, which appears in *The Court Magazine* for 1835, may have been painted. It is somewhat similar in style, and the subject of it was married to Sir John Trevelyan in the following year (1791). To this year also belongs the dated portrait of Dr. Benjamin Moseley, which was sold in 1896 for the rather ignominious price of £42. "In a black coat" is the comprehensive description vouchsafed to it in the sale catalogue, which cannot, unfortunately, be supplemented.

Two minor works by Hoppner, which may fittingly be mentioned here, are the "Love

Enamoured," known from an engraving by P. W. Tomkins, published in January, 1789, and the "Rescue from an Alligator," engraved and published in 1786, also known only through the engraving. The former shows a semi-recumbent, nude female figure in a landscape, looking over her left shoulder at a small Cupid. It is not a striking work, and its principal interest lies in the fact that the landscape and accessories are very similar to those which figure in his picture of "The Sleeping Nymph," painted several years later. The "Rescue from an Alligator" is a spirited setting of an incident which is said to have occurred at Jamaica. A young man is struggling in the water, his right leg within the creature's jaws, behind is a boat with four young men, one of whom is attacking the alligator with a boat-hook, in the background to the right is a group of negroes of both sexes, with a mountain in the distance, all in moonlight. Hoppner rarely ventured upon including so many figures in a composition, and it is so far unique. The engraving is the work of Henry Hudson.

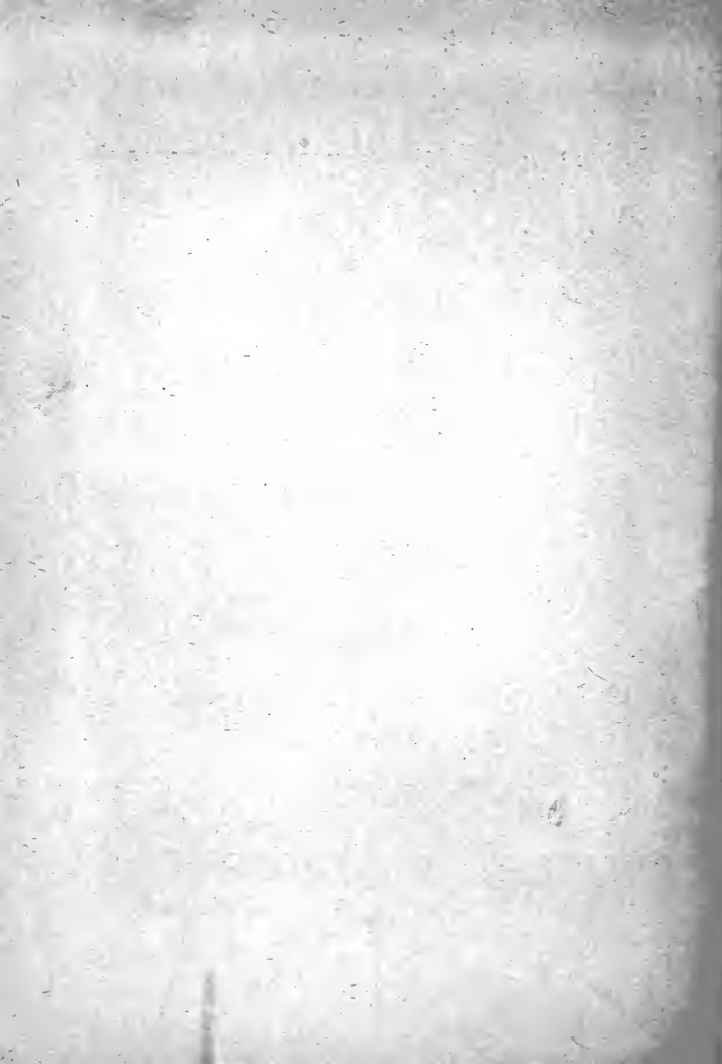
A picture of J. M. W. Turner in boyhood, attributed to Hoppner, and sold in 1893 for the not extravagant price of seven guineas, must have been painted about this time, if by him. Turner himself was given to asserting that he had only once sat for his portrait, and then to Dance, but his memory may have played him false. This picture affords the only suggestion which we know of any connection between these two great men, though they could not fail to have met frequently, indeed, they

were at Paris together in 1802, and Hoppner's own early struggles would have taught him to look sympathetically upon struggling genius, as, in fact, he is known to have done in other instances.





THE COUNTESS OF DARNLEY AND HER DAUGHTER



## CHAPTER V

### IN THE SACRED CIRCLE

1791-1795

1791—Royal portraits—Mrs. Jordan as “Hypolita”—Portraits of Hoppner’s children—The death of Sir Joshua—The rivalry of Lawrence—He is elected an Associate under Court pressure before Hoppner—Portrait of the Prince of Wales—Arabella Diana, Duchess of Dorset—Elected A. R. A.—Anthony Pasquin—Lady Caroline Capel—Mrs. Parkyns—Lady Charlotte Legge—His own portrait—The story of Haydn’s portrait—Elected R. A.—The Douglas children.

**I**N the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1791 Hoppner showed to considerable advantage. Lawrence, it is true, exhibited eleven works against his seven ; but his included the portraits of two royal princes, the Dukes of York and Clarence, and the splendid picture of Mrs. Jordan as “Hypolita,” besides the beautiful “Portraits of Children.” The other three pictures were a “Cupid and Psyche,” the fate of which is unknown, though the mezzotint by John Young still survives to give the idea of a technically clever, but not wholly pleasing picture ; a “Portrait of a Nobleman” ; and a “Portrait of a Nobleman’s Son,” which, too, have not been traced.

The portraits of the Duke of York and the Duke of Clarence are dignified state pictures ; the

former is shown standing, at full length, in uniform, bareheaded, in the orthodox stormy landscape; the latter also at full length, in the robes of the Garter, with his right hand resting on a table upon which is a roll, partly opened, showing the plan of a ship; this, too, is a dignified work. Both pictures are in the Royal Collection, and both have been finely engraved by Hodges.

The "Portraits of Children" shows a very pretty and natural group of Hoppner's own three children, Catherine Hampden (a boy), Richard Belgrave, and Henry Parkyns undressing by a stream-side preparatory to bathing. It is not necessary to inquire with what degree of equanimity Mrs. Hoppner would have viewed such a proceeding; the picture is, beyond all question, a delightful one, making a direct appeal to nature, which must have come upon the academic art of the day with something of a shock, while it marked a distinct step forward on the part of the artist. The original picture belonged to Richard Belgrave Hoppner, and was sold in 1893 for £997 10s. But James Ward's noble mezzotint is still to be seen, and as long as this is available it may safely be said that the picture will not be forgotten. The standing boy, it may be observed, bears a strong facial resemblance to his father, as portrayed in the Diploma Gallery, and is good-looking accordingly.

The portrait of Mrs. Jordan as "Hypolita" was one of Hoppner's finest works. He had painted her five years before, when he was, comparatively speaking, a novice, and had even then

excelled Romney's portrait of her, at least as regards the likeness and spirit, if not the unstudied grace of the original; but now his triumph was at all points incontestable. Mrs. Jordan's features depended for their attraction more upon their mobile charm than upon their regularity and conformity to accepted standards; Romney had been accustomed to the faultless beauty of Emma Hart, and was, at the time he made his attempt, so possessed with her image that he could find room for no other; Hoppner had no such divinity to distract him, and he applied himself *con amore* to the problem of catching and fixing the elusive charm of his subject. There is a witchery about his rendering of the famous actress that it is impossible to resist, and one realises the humorous fascination and unruffled sweetness of temper which could so completely enthrall and so long hold captive a royal prince in a licentious age. She is represented at half-length, in male attire, in high hat and feathers, coat with high collar, tight sleeves, with an eyeglass in her right hand, and a sword at her side, in the part of "Hypolita" (the spelling is that of the Royal Academy Catalogue) in the then popular piece *She Would and She Would Not*, as picturesque and roguish a study as was ever put on canvas. The picture has now drifted into private hands, and was last shown at Birmingham in 1903, having appeared also at the Paris Exposition, 1900. The fine engraving of it by John Jones is well known.

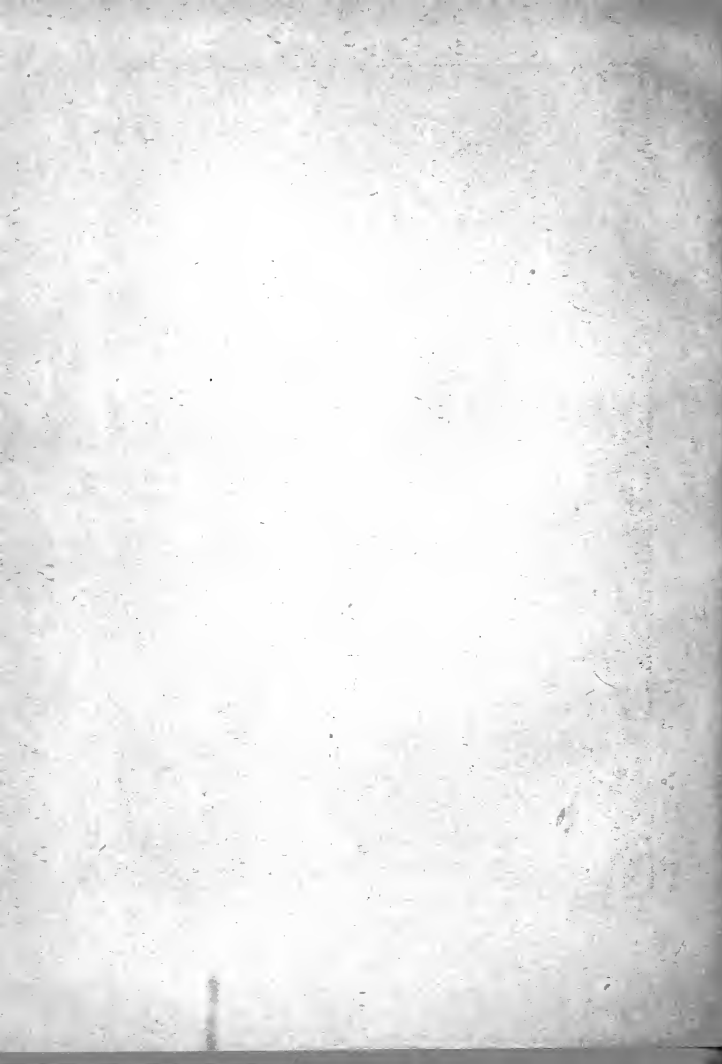
The portrait of Mlle. Hillsberg, the celebrated *danseuse*, shown by Mrs. Howard Smith at the

Grafton Galleries in 1894, must have been painted about this time, when the subject of it was at the height of her vogue in the fashionable world of London. Here, too, we may mention the picture entitled "Evelina," which is probably a portrait of Fanny Burney, who, according to Mr. Austin Dobson, was painted by Hoppner. In 1791 she had just broken in sunder the bonds of Court and was making the most of her newly regained liberty. Hoppner may well have met her under the hospitable roof of William Locke, the friend of artists, at Norbury Park, where both he and Miss Burney were frequent visitors, and where, too, in this year 1791, she first met General d'Arblay, the French refugee, whom she married two years later. The interest of this picture, however, is mainly historical, for, unless the engraving by Baldrey does the lost original a grave injustice, it cannot be ranked among Hoppner's masterpieces.

The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1792 marks another step forward on Hoppner's part, but bears testimony also to the formidable character of Lawrence's rivalry, backed as it was by all the influence of the Court. Sir Joshua had died in February, having been practically *hors de combat* for nearly two years. "There is now an end of the pursuit," he had written to his old friend, "the race is over, whether it is won or lost"; and Lawrence was appointed to his vacant place as Painter in Ordinary to His Majesty King George III. That of itself was no great matter, for the King's taste in pictures was not such as to cause



THE EARL OF CARLISLE





searchings of heart in any artist whom he overlooked; but it was a very serious matter indeed that in the November preceding the King had forced the unwilling Academicians to elect Lawrence a supplemental Associate of their number, when, in spite of the royal pressure, they had a short time before, on the occurrence of a regular vacancy, rejected him by a large majority in favour of Wheatley. Lawrence was still three years short of the regulation age of four-and-twenty, apart from the fact that no vacancy for an Associate then existed. The public could only see that a very young man had been chosen by the leaders of English Art in preference to older men whose work had hitherto been highly esteemed, and would draw their inferences accordingly. The blow to Hoppner especially must have been a very bitter one, and to Romney and Opie it was probably no less so, while the injustice of the favour thus shown was flagrant and intolerable. It is no wonder that henceforward Hoppner said hard things of the rival who had condescended to get the better of him by such methods.

It was probably this injustice on the part of the King that made Hoppner's influential friends rally round him at this crisis. Of the seven pictures shown by Hoppner in this year's exhibition—as against Lawrence's ten—no less than four were of Royalties; the Prince of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of York, and the Duke of Clarence. The other pictures shown by him were a "Portrait of a Nobleman," a "Sleeping Venus," and a "Portrait of a Gentleman."

The portrait of the Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV.) is probably the half-length belonging to H.R.H. the Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, and shown by her in the Guelph Exhibition, 1891. The full-length portraits of the Duke and Duchess of York are careful and dignified state portraits, but not intrinsically remarkable; they are best known in William Dickinson's engravings, published three years afterwards. The portrait of the Duke of Clarence is one of those in the Royal Collection, a fine state portrait, but not to be confused with the better one in naval uniform, which Hoppner painted four years later for Lord Moira.

The "Portrait of a Gentleman" is possibly that of Admiral Adam Duncan, created first Viscount Duncan in 1797, which was presented to the Corporation of the City of London by Alderman Boydell in 1793. Several small engravings exist of this picture, but Hoppner also painted the same subject after he became Viscount Duncan in 1797, and the fine and better-known engraving is that by James Ward after the latter picture. The earlier portrait was shown in the Guelph Exhibition, 1891. It has a special interest as marking the beginning of that series of portraits of naval officers, which became a note of Hoppner's work, probably as a result of the fashion set by the Duke of Clarence. The "Portrait of a Nobleman" may safely be assumed to be that of Lord Macartney, then newly raised to the English peerage on the eve of his departure as ambassador to China; the original picture

changed hands in 1898 for forty-seven guineas. Of the "Sleeping Venus," all we know is contained in Rogers's remark that it "was certainly very fine," though it is not impossible that he was referring to the "Sleeping Nymph," which was afterwards spoken of as a Venus.

The "Portrait of a Lady of Quality," which was Hoppner's sole contribution to the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1793, was, in all probability, the fine whole-length of Arabella Diana, Duchess of Dorset, which was shown by Lord Sackville at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891. The picture was most likely begun some time earlier, but that would be no bar to some delay in its completion, for it was a large work, 93 inches by 57 inches. The subject of it, a daughter of Sir Charles Cope, was married to the third Duke of Dorset in 1790, and was left a widow in 1799; two years after she married Charles, Lord Whitworth, and died at Knole, the seat of the Sackvilles, where her picture still hangs, in 1825. One of Hoppner's finest pictures is that of her children, painted in 1797, of which more anon. In this year Lawrence again outstripped Hoppner, exhibiting nine pictures.

A picture which may have been painted about this time is the portrait of Lady Jane Dundas, afterwards Viscountess Melville, a daughter of the second Earl of Hopetoun, who married Henry Dundas in 1793. This picture was engraved by Bartolozzi.

Before the opening of the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1794 Hoppner had been elected an

Associate of that august body, along with Beechey, in the face of strong competition ; but Lawrence had again outstripped him in the race for honours, being simultaneously elected a full Academician. Here, however, we have for the first time the aid of Pasquin, for what it is worth, which enables us at all events to identify some of the pictures, a blessed assistance indeed to the puzzled student, who has to look forward to four more years of anonymous portraiture before the Academicians revoked the absurd rule which forbade the publication of the names of any subjects but royalty. Of the nine pictures exhibited by Hoppner in this year's exhibition eight were portraits, and included "A Young Gentleman," two "Ladies of Quality," "A Lady," two "Noblemen," "A Bishop," and "A Gentleman." In his *Liberal Critique* Pasquin identifies one of the "ladies of quality" with Lady Caroline Capel, which he terms "spirited likeness," adding, however, "the drapery is fancifully displayed ; the dog in the foreground is ill-drawn, the child incorrect, and the whole assemblage seem frightened !"

A year later, however, he seems to have come to a better mind, for he writes :—

"Candour compels me to acknowledge that some of his more recent performances involve a purer air and grace, and seem to promise that the sins and blandishments of youth are regretted and given over. His portrait of Lady Caroline Capel was one of the best pictures in the late exhibition. There was an air of maternal tenderness without affectation in the principal figure,



MISS COUSSMAKER



and the reposing infant was delicately imagined. The face of Lady Caroline appeared more like artificial bloom than the glow of health, and there was too great a predominance of green throughout the whole."

The "Portrait of a Lady" he assigns to Mrs. Parkyns (afterwards Lady Ranccliffe), and this he terms "a very charming picture, which does much credit to the artist." The coloured print after this picture, from the engraving by Charles Wilkin, is well known.

Mrs. Parkyns was in all probability godmother to the son who was born to the Hoppners in 1795, Henry Parkyns Hoppner, who afterwards won distinction as a navigator and explorer. She was the wife of Thomas Boothby Parkyns, who afterwards became Baron Ranccliffe, and daughter of Sir W. James, of Eltham, Kent, and died in 1797. What is probably the original of this picture, a small painting  $12\frac{1}{4}$  inches by  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches, was sold in the sale of Madame de Falbe's effects in 1900 for twenty-six guineas, which seems an absurdly small price. The third picture mentioned by Pasquin is that described in the catalogue as "A Gale of Wind," which he describes as "a slight but meritorious performance. The spray of the sea is better depicted than in any other similar attempt that I have lately seen."

This picture seems to have been retained in the Hoppner family, and has now vanished. Perhaps it is the one referred to by Sir M. A. Shee, in his *Elements of Art*.

Who the "Noblemen" and the "Bishop" were

does not certainly appear. One of the former may well have been the fine full-length portrait of Francis Hastings, Earl of Moira, which hangs in Buckingham Palace, and was engraved by John Young. The latter was, perhaps, Dr. Beilby Porteus, Bishop of London, an active and able man, who was then coming very much to the front as a leader of the Evangelical revival. Hoppner seems to have been upon terms of some intimacy with the Evangelical circle generally; he subsequently painted Hannah More, Thomas Babington and his son-in-law, the Rev. W. Gisborne, Henry Thornton and his wife, Archdeacon Nares, and others. Dr. Porteus is chiefly remembered by some bulky volumes of sermons, and as having in a twenty-two years' occupation of the see of London accumulated a princely fortune without adding a single church to the see. In extenuation it may be urged that he had a pretty wit. He objected, it is said, to christening infants with long names, and that on a child being named to him Thomas Timothy he unceremoniously christened it Tom Tit. The portrait shows a handsome man with a strong face. Lord Dartmouth was a prominent member of this circle; and the remaining "Lady of Quality" was, most likely, his daughter, Lady Charlotte Legge, afterwards Lady Feversham; or, perhaps, Charlotte, Viscountess St. Asaph, both of whom are recorded to have been painted in this year. Both are fine portraits, especially the former, and both were afterwards engraved by Charles Wilkin and included in *The Select Series of Ladies of Rank and Fashion*. Lady



Charlotte Legge's is a beautiful picture, and one is not surprised at her being selected as one of the bridesmaids of the Princess of Wales. "She has," writes a modern critic, "a queenly bearing. She came, indeed, from days when an 'air' was accounted a woman's greatest charm, though she lived into a time when the *bourgeois* tone was universal." A modern critic has raised doubts as to this queenly bearing, which he attributes unhesitatingly to the imagination of the artist; it is fortunate, therefore, that another portrait of this lady, by Romney, is in existence, to prove that the likeness is faithful and characteristic. The original is in possession of the Earl of Dartmouth, and was shown at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1886, at the Grafton Galleries in 1894, and at Wolverhampton in 1902. The picture of Lady St. Asaph is also lovely, and she is interesting besides, as having been the grandmother of the poet Swinburne: she was a Percy, and the original portrait was painted for her father, the Earl of Beverley, whence it has now passed to her descendant, the Duke of Northumberland.

The "Portrait of a Gentleman" was either that of Hoppner himself, which he painted upon his election as an Associate, or the unfinished one of Haydn, which is now at Buckingham Palace. The former supposition is, perhaps, the most probable. Hoppner's portrait of himself is, unquestionably, a splendid work. "Rarely," writes Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, "had he so fine a sitter. There is a grave dignity about him . . . and his sweet-

ness of expression (before the days when he was bilious) is not dependent upon the tricky effect of the eyes. . . . It was a spiritual face, one which belied the scandal currently suggested by those who told the story of his origin. . . .”

The praise is not, to our mind, too high. The picture now hangs in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House, and it was also shown at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891. It has been engraved exceedingly well by Charles Turner, and very fairly by Henry Meyer, and the latter version appears in *The Gallery of British Portraits*. Hoppner's portrait had also been drawn in profile by Dance, two years previously; probably a more characteristic, if rather less pleasing production.

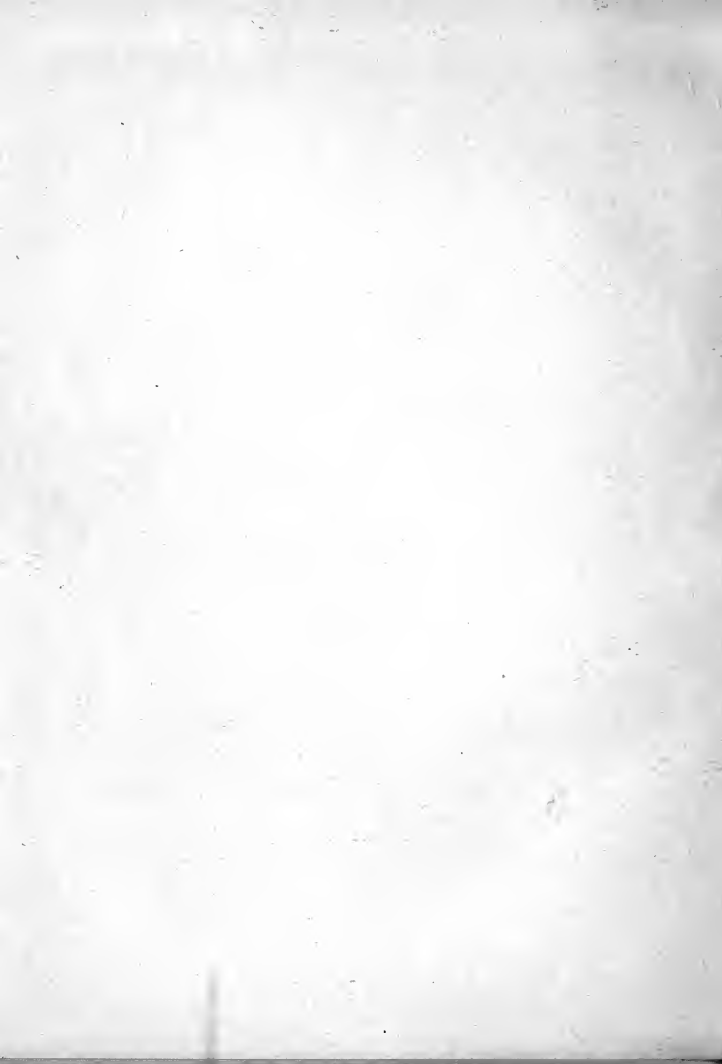
The portrait of Francis Joseph Haydn, the composer, is a three-quarter length, seated, and was painted for the Prince of Wales in this year. In *The Quarterly Review* for 1817, the story of this portrait is told at some length, probably by Gifford. A fable had found its way into print of Haydn's having sat to Reynolds for his portrait in 1794, and of the painter having sent for a pretty German servant-girl to amuse him, on which the writer observes:—

“Sir Joshua Reynolds had been nearly three years in his grave at this period; and the person to whom Haydn sat for his portrait was the late Mr. Hoppner, who, if he had languished for a conversation ‘in his native tongue,’ was very capable of gratifying him.

“We knew Haydn, and well remember the circumstance of his sitting for his picture. He



WILLIAM GIFFORD



was a coarse and hard-featured man, who, among other amiable weaknesses, cherished that of conceiting himself to be somewhat of an Adonis. He would sit with exemplary patience to be painted; but no birthday beauty was ever more solicitous to choose the favourable moment. Many a time, when an hour had been fixed for his attendance, he would get up from his chair, gaze steadfastly and wistfully in the glass, and say, 'I don't tink I look well to-day; I will not see Mr. Hoppner'; and Salomon was accordingly despatched with his excuses. The picture was not quite finished when Haydn left England; it was, however, so striking a likeness of this extraordinary man, that the Prince of Wales, for whom it was painted, would not permit Hoppner to touch it after his departure, and the portrait is now in His Royal Highness's possession."

This picture was shown at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891, and again at Birmingham in 1903; it is now, as we have said, at Buckingham Palace.

The well-known "Nature when unadorn'd adorn'd the most," familiar to most of us in Charles Knight's engraving, was probably painted in this year. It may have been a portrait of Mrs. Hoppner; but if so, it does not represent her at her best.

In 1795 Hoppner exhibited nine pictures, against a similar number by Lawrence. He had now been elected an Academician, and was so far on an equality with his rival, while his work was immeasurably superior to anything that Lawrence could then achieve. The critics hailed him as

easily the best among the portrait painters, and placed Lawrence, Shee, Beechey, and Muller in the next rank. An Academy catalogue in the British Museum, annotated by the hand of some good Samaritan, gives us the names of his sitters, and they were a distinguished group. Hoppner never did anything much better than the beautiful pictures of the Douglas children and the daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland; and his other subjects were the Duke of Rutland, Lady Charlotte Pirey, Justice Rooke, Lord Weymouth, Lady Young, Lady Charlotte Greville, Lady Darnley, and Colonel Grosvenor. The Douglas Children, engraved in a splendid mezzotint by James Ward four years later, and published with the rather mawkish title "Juvenile Retirement," shows an unstudied group of four children, two boys and two girls, three of them sitting on a bank at the foot of a tree, and the fourth, the elder of the boys, standing up, dressed in the quaint attire of the day. The younger boy, in a rebellious mood, which the artist has caught perfectly, lies sprawling on the bank at the feet of his sisters, who are simply dressed, and prettily and naturally posed; and the whole is set in a background of trees and pleasant woodland. There is no straining after effect, no forced or unnatural grouping or attitudes, the composition is, to all appearance, perfectly effortless; nothing could be simpler, so it would seem, than to paint these children in their everyday attitudes and surroundings. But in its easy mastery and lightness of touch, it forms a picture which Romney alone, of Hoppner's contempo-

raries, could have produced, and of which Sir Joshua, with all his love for children and natural kindness of heart, would have been utterly incapable. It required the experienced father of a family, as well as the artist, to mark down and record the wilful attitude and the tumbled garments of the little boy, and this was a qualification which fate had denied to Sir Joshua. Incidentally, too, it reveals something of the keen sense of humour with which Hoppner is generally credited by his contemporaries; also the courage which was required to shock the grave traditions of the Royal Academy, and its platonic yearnings after the "grand style." To that elder generation, Art—as Macaulay once observed of a German joke—was no laughing matter. Above all, this picture marks another distinct step in that return to nature, of which, as we have seen, Hoppner was, in practice, one of the chief preachers. Indeed, it is natural and healthy to the core, and as such it must have impressed all who saw it.

It is hard to think of these children as old and grey-headed and the forebears of numerous descendants. But the elder boy became in time the nineteenth Earl Morton, and the group still hangs in his old home at Dalmahoy; the girls afterwards took their places in the great world as Lady Frances Stewart and the Countess of Aberdeen; while the little fellow who objected with such obvious temper to being painted, entered Holy Orders in the Irish Church, and died sixty-two years afterwards, in 1857, without a stain upon his character.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ZENITH

1795 (continued) to 1797

1795, The Frankland daughters—"Dear dead women"—The Countess of Darnley—Pasquin's *Critical Guide*—"Some embarrassments"—1796, Hoppner at his best—"Miranda"—Mrs. Lascelles—Lady Charlotte Campbell—Mrs. Jordan as "Rosalind"—Lady Bligh—The Beresford portraits—Thomas Babington of Rothley Temple—The Supplementary Militia and Gillray—1797, another triumph for Hoppner—Mrs. Sheridan—Lady Oxford—The Sackville children—Lady Coote—Pasquin's depreciation.

THE other great picture by Hoppner in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1795 was that of the daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland, catalogued as "Portraits of Young Ladies," which was afterwards engraved by William Ward and published under the title of "The Sisters." This picture has always been a popular favourite, and deservedly so. It is a whole-length of two girls, in white dresses with blue sashes, the one with her arm about the neck of the other, seated on the ground with drawing materials in a fine landscape, while a dog lies curled up at their feet—a glorious composition both as regards light and colour. The nearer girl looks towards the spectator with a shyly pathetic wistfulness which





MRS. LASCELLES, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS OF HAREWOOD



is very attractive. Both are beautiful, and both are unmistakably ladies, distinguished by a native dignity upon which only a very rash man would think of infringing. It is just this quality of dignified grace which so effectually marks off the female portraits of Hoppner and his contemporaries of this period from the Academy portraiture of the present day, and it needs no *laudator temporis acti* to realise that grace and dignity and sweetness of character would seem to have been theirs in no stinted measure. The race of English ladies is far from extinct, but it certainly does not figure upon the walls of the Academy as it once did; one has only to compare these Frankland damsels, or the fine picture of the Ladies Catherine and Sarah Bligh, which Hoppner painted in the following year, with two sisters by Mr. Sargent, which attracted attention a year or two since, to realise the gulf which, in this respect, separates the closing years of the eighteenth from the opening years of the twentieth century.

There has been some difficulty about the identification of these damsels: there were two Sir Thomas Franklands, of different generations, and it is questionable which was their father. On the whole it seems most likely that they were Amelia and Marianne, daughters of Sir Thomas Frankland, sixth baronet, and granddaughters of Admiral Sir Thomas Frankland, fifth baronet, a descendant of Oliver Cromwell, whose seat was at Thirkleby, in Yorkshire; they died young and unmarried, one of them in this very year, and

the other five years later. The Admiral was the father of seven daughters, one of whom married Sir Boyle Roche, the celebrated perpetrator of "bulls," and an extant engraving of Lady Roche shows a sweet, delicate face, not unlike that of the nearer of the two sisters. Another of the Admiral's daughters married one of the Hares of Hurstmonceaux, and became the mother of famous sons. But the glory has departed from the family, and this portrait of the daughters of their house adorns the palace of a modern virtuoso. It was recently exhibited at the Glasgow Loan Exhibition, and again at Birmingham in 1903, where it had the place of honour among a rare collection of eighteenth-century masterpieces.

Another beautiful portrait by Hoppner in this year's Academy Exhibition was that of the Countess of Darnley, now the property of her descendant, the Rev. Duncan Brownlow, which was recently shown at the Old Masters Exhibition at Dublin. The Countess stands at three-quarter length, close to a tree on some high ground in the park at Cobham, whence the cupolas of Cobham Hall show among the distant trees upon the left of the picture. The face is a lovely one, and instinct with character, and the attitude graceful and unconstrained.

Hoppner painted two portraits of John Henry, fifth Duke of Rutland, one of which was exhibited in 1795, though it cannot be identified with certainty. Possibly that in Yeomanry uniform, afterwards engraved by Charles Turner, is the earlier. Both are fine portraits, and they are

still in possession of the family. Among other portraits in the same exhibition those of Lady Charlotte Greville, an exceedingly pretty picture, engraved by John Young in 1796, and that of Colonel Grosvenor, now at Eaton Hall, are known with certainty. The remaining four are untraced, though the names of the subjects are duly noted in the annotated catalogue.

The pathetic picture of the "Wood Girl," now only known in J. Gisborne's engraving, which was published in January, 1896, cannot have been painted later than this year. The subject, a ragged girl, barefooted, with pinched, drawn face, stands facing the artist, holding a bundle of faggots on her head; trees, cottages, and a pond form the background. It is a pathetic piece of work. The attitude of the girl is suggested by a sketch attributed to Gainsborough at South Kensington.

In the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1796, Pasquin comes on the scenes again with *A Critical Guide*, prefacing his observations with a note of certain "embarrassments" which preceded the opening of the exhibition. The "hangmen" of the year were Hoppner and Westall, and finding that there were more pictures than could be accommodated on the walls, Hoppner wrote to Beechey, offering to withdraw one of his own whole-length portraits if Beechey would consent to do the same. Beechey did not answer the note, and Hoppner, taking his consent for granted, acted accordingly. On hearing of Hoppner's action Beechey flew into a passion and demanded

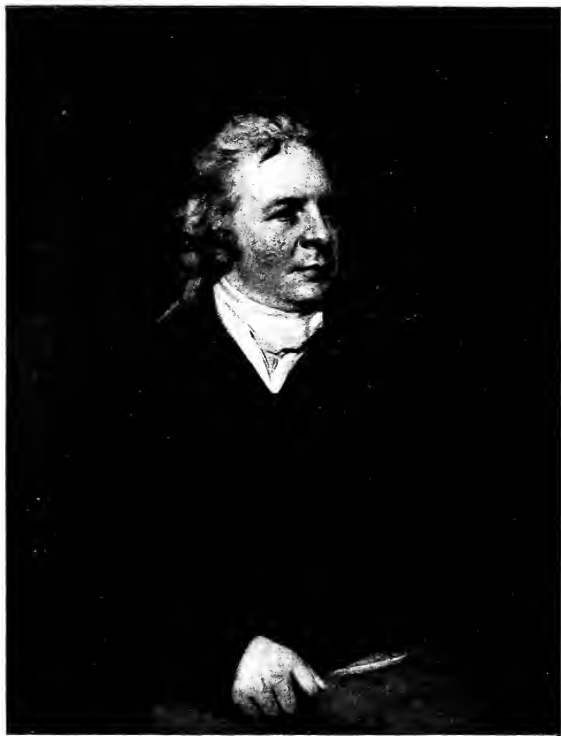
his pictures back, but the request was judiciously disregarded. On this Pasquin observes, perhaps sarcastically—

“Mr. Beechey was very wrong to attach any idea of *presumption* to a gentleman so proverbial for modesty and good sense as Mr. Hoppner; and, we trust, feels abashed for such a misappropriation of epithets.”

The quarrel with Beechey must have been made up, for the two were certainly good friends in after life.

Hoppner could well afford to withdraw a whole-length from this exhibition, for he had eleven pictures to his credit, of which the majority were fine whole-lengths, including the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Clarence, “Miranda,” Lady Charlotte Campbell, the Duke of Bedford, Mrs. Lascelles, Lady Paget, Lady Bligh, and one which the annotator of the Academy Catalogue labels Mrs. Jordan, and Pasquin, Mrs. Brouncker. In this Pasquin was probably wrong, and the portrait of Mrs. Jordan is most likely identical with that of the actress as Rosalind, which was sold at Christie’s in 1894 for 1,100 guineas. It is said that this picture was engraved by J. Jones, and that the engraving was for some reason suppressed. The critics, again, gave him the first place among the portrait painters, with Lawrence, Beechey, and Opie following.

The portrait of the Prince of Wales may be assumed to be that in Buckingham Palace, which is undoubtedly a fine work. Pasquin characterises it as “from its hasty execution and unfortunate



GEORGE HIBBERT





position a *degradation* both of *Prince* and *artist*"; but this may be credited to an amiable desire to set Hoppner and his patron by the ears, and need not be taken seriously. The portrait of the Duke of Clarence was that painted for Lord Moira, and is best known in Charles Knight's engraving: the Duke wears the uniform of the Lord High Admiral of England, with the Star and Ribbon of the Garter; he stands on a rocky coast with a sea-fight visible in the distance on the left—very much the same arrangement of accessories as in the Nelson portrait, painted some years later. It is an effective picture, as even Pasquin admits.

The portrait which this generation knows as "Miranda" is that of Mrs. Michael Angelo Taylor, originally Miss Frances Anne Vane, whose husband was the Recorder of Poole; it is now in the possession of the Marquess of Londonderry, the present representative of the Vane family, and was exhibited by him in 1894. The picture is typical of Hoppner at his best. A beautiful girl stands on a wild, sea-beat coast, her dress and hair blown by the wind, with one hand behind her to steady the flying cloak, and the other pointing forward, as if directing some inquirer in the way. The face is lovely and irresistible, and the expression wistful and innocent. On the other hand, the proportions of the lower limbs are more than doubtful, and the very pretty little shoes, rather obtrusively displayed, are distinctly out of keeping with the rugged surroundings. But, when the worst has been said, it is a noble picture, quite on a level with the best work of that time or

later, and a perpetual delight, as such things are. The picture has been finely engraved by James Ward, and a greatly daring modern engraver has tried his hand upon it with indifferent success.

The identity of the picture said to be that of Lady Bligh is something of a puzzle. On the whole it seems most likely that this is a careless record of the portrait of the Ladies Catherine and Sarah Bligh, sisters of the Earl of Darnley, which was—to judge from the costume—painted in this year (1796), and is too splendid work to have missed appearing in the Academy. It represents two girls in white, the foremost one sitting in an attitude of unstudied grace on a bank of grass at the foot of a tree, while her sister stands or kneels behind her. On the left is a view of the estuary of the Thames, such as would be visible from Cobham Park or the immediate neighbourhood. There is an odd likeness in the seated girl to “Miranda,” and if this seated figure be that of Lady Catherine, who afterwards married the Marquess of Londonderry—whose second wife was another member of the Vane family—the coincidence becomes still more singular. The picture hangs among other art treasures at Cobham Hall.

Pasquin ranks as Hoppner’s best in this year’s exhibition the “Miranda” and the portrait of Mrs. Lascelles, afterwards Countess of Harewood. This latter is in possession of Lord Harewood, and was exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1886. It shows a gloriously beautiful woman,

and though scarcely equal to the "Miranda," undoubtedly runs it very close. The easy grace of the attitude, the stately poise of the head, and the flowing lines of the drapery, apart from the beauty of the colouring, are sufficient to mark it as a masterpiece. The mother of the Douglas children was a Lascelles, a daughter of the first Lord Harewood, and Hoppner's intimacy with the family may be gauged from the fact that his youngest boy, who was born about this time, was named Wilson Lascelles Hoppner. This lad inherited his father's artistic ability, and began an art career of exceptional promise, which was cut short by an early death.

The "Portrait of a Young Gentleman" is identified with a Master Alexander, but there our knowledge of this picture ends. He may have been a son of the artist, W. Alexander, who accompanied Lord Macaulay to Venice, and painted some fine pictures of Eastern subjects. That of the Duke of Bedford (Francis, fifth duke) is most likely the splendid whole-length which is now in Buckingham Palace, from which P. W. Tomkins made a half-length engraving in 1802, the year of the Duke's death. Hoppner painted the Duke again in 1797, and this portrait is probably the one now at Woburn. Sir George Scharf considers that the picture at Buckingham Palace is "more dignified and well painted than the similar one at Woburn." The Woburn portrait was engraved by John Raphael Smith.

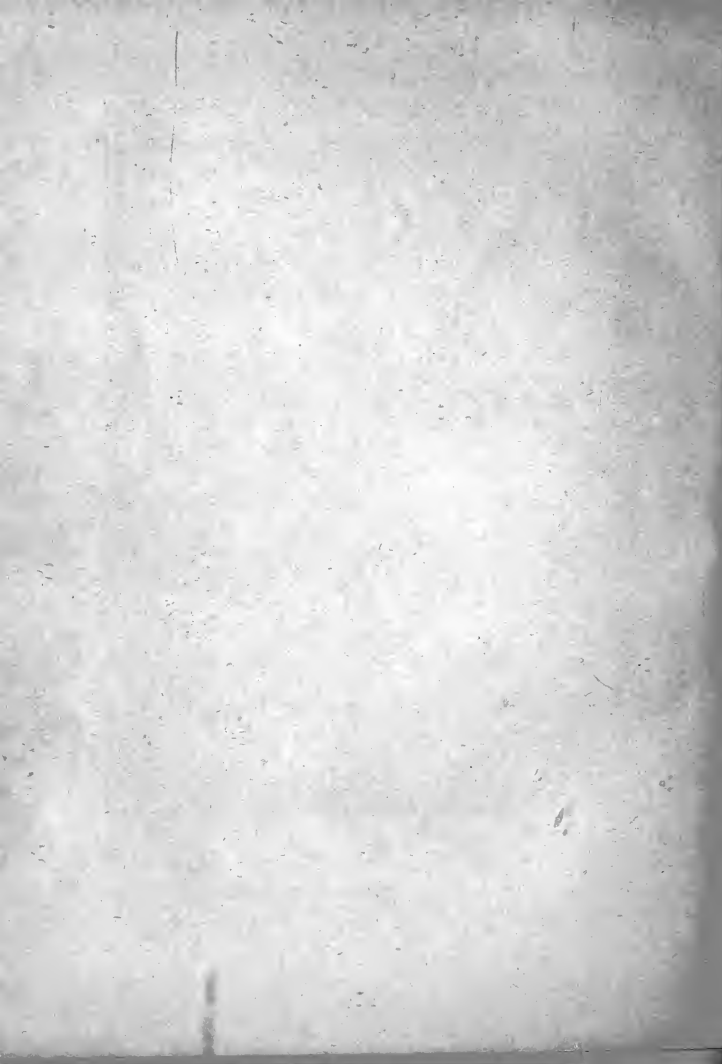
The full-length of Lady Charlotte Campbell afterwards appeared in *The Select Series of Ladies*

of *Rank and Fashion*, in truncated form, engraved by Charles Wilkin. Pasquin tells us that she was here supposed to personate Aurora, and generally depreciates the picture. He is right in directing attention to the bad drawing of the right arm, but the picture is otherwise beautiful, and it has always been a favourite. The subject was a daughter of the Duke of Argyll, and her mother was one of the beautiful Miss Gunnings, much painted of Sir Joshua; her second husband was the Rev. Edward Bury; she attained some distinction as a novelist under the name of Lady Charlotte Bury. The picture is at Inveraray. Pasquin had some hard words, too, for Hoppner's portrait of Lady Paget in this exhibition. The picture itself, however, is not available to check him, and Pasquin is a critic who requires corroborative evidence before his judgments can be accepted. The portrait of "Mr. Manners" is not known.

Among the other portraits painted about this time was the half-length of Sir Ralph Abercromby, which was exhibited at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891 by Mr. John Carrick-Moore. It is a pleasing work, the shrewd, strong, and not unkindly face is well caught; and ability is marked in every line of it. His sons inherited his ability, for one became a distinguished general, and captured Mauritius for England, and another rose to be Speaker of the House of Commons. The undated portrait of Mrs. Elizabeth Billington, shown at the same exhibition by Mr. H. L. Bischoffsheim, may also be assigned to this period.



MRS. GEORGE HIBBERT



Mrs. Billington was at the height of her fame as a singer in 1786, but the style of the dress makes it clear that the picture was painted some time later, and she left the country as the wife of a French adventurer in 1799. Mr. Henry Willett's two portraits of the Bishop of Meath and his wife, exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1888, are also supposed to have been painted about this time. Here, too, may be mentioned the three portraits of Mrs. Martin and her sisters, Miss Judith and Miss Frances Beresford, which were exhibited at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1893 by the executors of the late Miss Martin. Mrs. Martin was the youngest of the trio, members of a Derbyshire family, and was born in 1775. The portrait was most likely painted upon her marriage, which must have taken place about this time. To judge from modern engravings, they must be beautiful pictures; after making allowance, that is to say, for the insipidity which seems to be inseparable from modern copies of Hoppner's works.

Another pair of pictures painted about this time are those of the Rev. Thomas Gisborne, and his father-in-law, Thomas Babington, of Rothley Temple. Mr. Gisborne was a man of some distinction in the world of contemporary letters, and was only a year older than Hoppner; he had a delicate, artistic face, to which Hoppner would naturally do full justice. The portrait may still be in the possession of his descendants. Thomas Babington, of Rothley Temple, had married a sister of Zachary Macaulay, and it was in his

house that Lord Macaulay was born in October, 1800, and here he was baptised, a month later, with the names of "Thomas Babington." The portrait of Thomas Babington himself, a half-length in a grey coat and pink vest, changed hands in 1901 for £176 10s.

This was a time of unrest and the fear of a French invasion, and the manhood of the country was busily organising itself to take its share in the needful resistance. Hoppner enrolled himself among the rest, and Gillray included him in his caricature entitled "Supplementary Militia turning out for twenty days," in which Hoppner appears in the centre of the rank, armed with a pallet marked "R.A." "Does he," endorses some strange hand upon this, "intimate his readiness to *brush*?"

The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1797 was another triumph for Hoppner. He sent thirteen pictures against his rival's six, and these included some of his very best work. The noblemen portrayed were the Duke of Bedford, the Earl of Uxbridge, the Earl of Carlisle, Lord Berkeley, and Lord Gower; the ladies were Mrs. Sheridan, Lady Oxford, Miss Morris of Swansea, and Mrs. Caldwell; Dr. Heath, "The Master of Eaton" (Pasquin says Dr. Davis), and Mr. Morris represented the gentlemen; there was the lovely group of the Sackville children, and a fancy subject, "The Idle Girl." The portrait of the Duke of Bedford, as we have already said, is probably that at Woburn; Pasquin terms it "a coarse likeness," and suggests a resemblance



to "a lounging pickpocket," but competent judges pronounce it a fine work, and it has been worthily engraved by John Raphael Smith. Frederick, Earl of Carlisle, was a good subject for Hoppner's pencil, a refined and cultured man, with his character writ large on his face, well known as a discriminating patron of the fine arts. Pasquin reviles the picture in strong language, but, in spite of some insipidity, it does not deserve this hard judgment, and it certainly shows to advantage in the engraving by Henry Meyer. The portrait of Lady Oxford is not that which now hangs in the National Gallery, and its whereabouts is unknown. That of Mrs. Sheridan, the second wife of the many-sided statesman, is also beautiful, though in a different way, and this, too, comes in for virulent abuse from Pasquin. She is represented in rustic garb, stepping down to a brook with a pitcher to draw water, looking over her shoulder at a little boy whom she is carrying on her back. The bright face of the boy and his unstudied attitude are in Hoppner's happiest vein; and Mrs. Sheridan's, too, is a very convincing figure, natural and homely, effectually refuting the charge so commonly brought against Hoppner of making all his women beautiful, whether they were actually so or not. The trees and landscape in this picture are also beyond the capacity of most of his contemporaries. The picture is only known to us through Nugent's engraving, later impressions of which are entitled "Fetching Water."

But far in advance of this is the picture of the

Sackville children, whose father was the third Duke of Dorset, one of the very loveliest of the many lovely studies of childhood by Hoppner. A pretty and graceful little girl, in a high-waisted white dress, stands leaning against a bank on the left of the picture, her face turned to the front and looking down. On the right a younger brother steps forward and restrains a baby sister from some undesirable move. He is a fine English boy, manly and bright, and the baby sister, in her white dress and barefooted, is an attractive childish figure. Behind is a park-like landscape, very likely drawn from nature at Knole. It is difficult to convey the charm of the picture in words, but once seen it is not easily forgotten. The children are Lady Mary Sackville, afterwards Countess of Plymouth; Lady Elizabeth Sackville, afterwards Countess de la Warr; and their brother, George Frederick, afterwards fourth Duke of Dorset. A later painting by Charles Robertson shows the last named as a strikingly handsome young man, standing in riding costume in a wild Irish landscape, such as that in which he lost his life soon after, the victim of an accident in the hunting-field. The original picture by Hoppner is at Knole. It is singular that so fine a work has never been engraved.

This exhausts the list of Hoppner's pictures in the Academy Exhibition of 1797 which can be traced. But the portrait of Lord Mornington (afterwards Marquess Wellesley), the original of which is at Apsley House, while an engraving from it was published by John Young in 1800,



LADY EUSTON



must have been painted in this year at the latest, as the subject of it sailed for India in the autumn, and was absent until 1805. Minarets and a flag, it may be observed, are introduced among the accessories. The victory of Seringapatam and the conquest of Mysore probably furnished the occasion of Young's engraving. It is very likely that the fine group of Lady Mornington and her sons Henry and Richard, which was on view recently in London, was painted at the same time. It is in Hoppner's best style, and deserves to be better known than it is. So, too, is the noble full-length of Miss Charlotte Estwick, afterwards Mrs. Denison, shown at Agnew's in 1903, which must be dated about this time.

Another exceedingly fine work is the portrait of Lady Coote, wife of Sir Charles Coote of Donnybrook, which must have been painted about this year, probably upon her marriage. The picture shows a beautiful woman, three-quarter length, seated on a bank under trees, facing the spectator. The pose and expression are particularly happy, and it is astonishing that the picture fetched no more than £1,890 at the Price sale in 1895. The explanation is probably that it was there brought into sharp competition with several old-established and better-known favourites. The drawing of the left arm, too, is a little doubtful. The pretty "Cottage Children Opening a Gate," afterwards engraved by Ogbourne, must also have been painted about now.

Hoppner's reputation was now at its height. Not the least indication of it is to be found in the

bitter depreciation of Pasquin, who was reduced to shooting his last arrows before he was encountered and vanquished with ignominy by Gifford, of which more anon. After pointing to the unapproachable excellences of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which Hoppner would have been the first to admit without reserve, he continues:—

“The absurd and unqualified praises which have been given, in various journals, to Mr. Hoppner would be suffered to pass as instances of insufferable vanity in the painter, or uncommon predilection in his adherents (as friends they cannot be), if they did not, in the same moment, combine an obsibilating and *stabbing* sarcasm upon competition, which no liberal mind could engender, and no good man encourage. Where they originated we know not, but they assuredly cannot be sufficiently discountenanced. . . . The pre-eminence cannot be denied to Beechey; Lawrence follows him; and then, *magno intervallo*, Hoppner and Hamilton.”

The critic could hardly have been more at fault: Beechey has been all but forgotten, somewhat undeservedly so in our view; Lawrence is fast finding his level, and that a low one; Hamilton is unknown; and Hoppner easily heads the list. But Gifford's contemporary testimony is also, when all allowances have been made for friendly feeling on the part of the author, fairly conclusive on this point:—

“I too, whose voice no claims but truth e'er moved,  
Who long have seen thy merits, long have loved,  
Yet loved in silence, lest the rout should say

Too partial friendship tuned th' applausive lay ;  
Now, now that all conspire thy name to raise,  
May join the shout of unsuspected praise.  
Go then, since the long struggle now is o'er,  
And envy can obstruct thy fame no more ;  
With ardent hand thy magic toil pursue,  
And pour fresh wonders on our raptured view.  
One SUN is set, one GLORIOUS SUN ; whose rays  
Long gladdened Britain with no common blaze :  
Oh, mayst THOU soon (for clouds begin to rise)  
Assert his station in the Eastern skies,  
Glow with his fires, and give the world to see  
Another REYNOLDS risen, MY friend, in THEE !”

But what, one would like to know, were the clouds? Were they boding symptoms of the malady that was to kill him some years hence, or the rivalry of Lawrence, which may have seemed for the moment to have been overcome? There is nothing to tell, but it is very certain that Hoppner never again quite equalled his splendid performance of this year, though he lived to do much fine work—work that would have established the reputation of a smaller man. He was now in the zenith of his powers, and Gifford, at least, seemed to realise the fact.

## CHAPTER VII

GIFFORD AND GILLRAY

1797 (continued) to 1798

Gifford and Pasquin—Peter Pindar—Hoppner and Gifford—The Murray Portrait—The Ireland Portrait—"Titianus Redivivus"—1798, a successful year for Hoppner—Lady Anne Lambton and Children—The Countess of Oxford—Admiral Lord Duncan—The Hon. Mrs. E. Bouverie—The Hibbert portraits—The Earl of Inchiquin—The Whitbread portraits—The Countess of Euston—Lady Elizabeth Howard—Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, *née* Compton.

IN this year we lose a useful, but not invariably trustworthy, contemporary witness to Hoppner's progress in Anthony Pasquin, whose real name was John Williams. His features may still be studied in Shee's portrait. There was little to admire in the man (Macaulay called him a "polecat," and "a malignant and filthy baboon") save a certain shrewd sense, backed by an imperfect artistic training, which lent a real value to his utterances when he had no ulterior motive for distorting the truth. But he usually had some grudge to satisfy or some opponent to malign, and when there was anything of that kind toward, he was as reckless and unscrupulous in his statements as only an eighteenth-century libeller could be when he put his mind to it. Gifford was an





LADY ANNE CULLING SMITH AND HER DAUGHTERS



object of mortal dislike to him, and he pursued him with shameless and incessant malignity, assisted by Dr. Wolcot, better known to the world as Peter Pindar, himself, from long practice and natural talent, a past master in the art of fluent and foul-mouthed scurrility. What Wolcot's grievance against Gifford could be, unless it were that he was a friend of Hoppner, the rival of John Opie, who was Wolcot's own particular *protégé*, it is hard to say. Gifford was as thick-skinned a man and as tough a fighter as a hard life spent continually on the defensive could make him, but the time had now come when he could tolerate the nuisance no longer, and he turned vigorously to bay. He cudgelled, or tried to cudgel, Wolcot—reports differed as to the result of the encounter, and even as to which party was the immediate aggressor—and so handled Williams in print that the latter was forced to prosecute him for libel. "Williams," wrote Gifford, "was so lost to every sense of decency and shame that his acquaintance was infamy and his touch poison." In his defence Gifford showed that Williams had grossly libelled every respectable character in the kingdom from the King downwards. Williams was non-suited, and Gifford warmly complimented from the Bench for exposing him. After this Williams emigrated to America, where he died miserably a few years afterwards.

The passage in which Gifford thus denounced Williams occurs in a note to an edition of *The Baviad* and *The Mæviad*, which appeared this year with a warm dedication to Hoppner as "a small

but grateful memorial of the affectionate and faithful regard of his most obliged friend," to whom he professes to be indebted for much timely encouragement :—

"Thou too, MY HOPPNER! if my wish availed,  
Shouldst praise the strain that but for thee had failed :  
Thou knowest, when Indolence possessed me all,  
How oft I roused at thy inspiring call ;  
Burst from the Syren's fascinating power,  
And gave the Muse thou lovest, one studious hour."

And upon this follow the lines from which we have already quoted. To his edition of Juvenal, published a few years later, was prefixed an engraved portrait taken from Hoppner's picture of Gifford, which was probably painted about this time. The original picture is in possession of Mr. John Murray, at Albemarle Street. It is a fine and expressive half-length, though not on the whole so effective as that of the earlier portrait which Hoppner painted for Dean Ireland, in which Gifford is represented looking down at a book which he is reading. Nichols much preferred this latter, while admitting that Mr. Murray's was a good likeness. This picture changed hands at Christie's in May, 1899, for £84, and was exhibited at Birmingham in 1903 by Mr. G. W. Agnew. An outline engraving was published in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1827, shortly after Gifford's death.

To this year belongs an incident alluded to by Pasquin in his *Critical Guide* to the Academy, and related by Sandby, who had been exercising his talents in the composition of "a doodle-doo song

on some of our members of the Royal Academy learning to paint in the style of Titian, taught the secret—for ten guineas each—by a Miss Provis, whose father pretends he got it from an ancestor who was in Venice in Titian's time." So he continues:—

"Farington, Opie, Rigaud, Westall, Smirke, Stothard, and Hoppner: these seven wise artists, after seeing a small picture painted by Mr. West, in Titian's style, determined to purchase the secret from Provis: they agreed to give ten guineas each, and formed a committee to settle the business under a bond to forfeit £2,000 if anyone disclosed the secret. This has caused much mirth. Beechey and I laid our *wise heads* together, and soon found out all the trick without subscribing a shilling. . . . Mr. Cosway has lately procured a treatise in Italian which is very scarce—it was published in Venice in Titian's time—and the whole process is fully displayed. Provis must have seen this book, and so would hum the public."

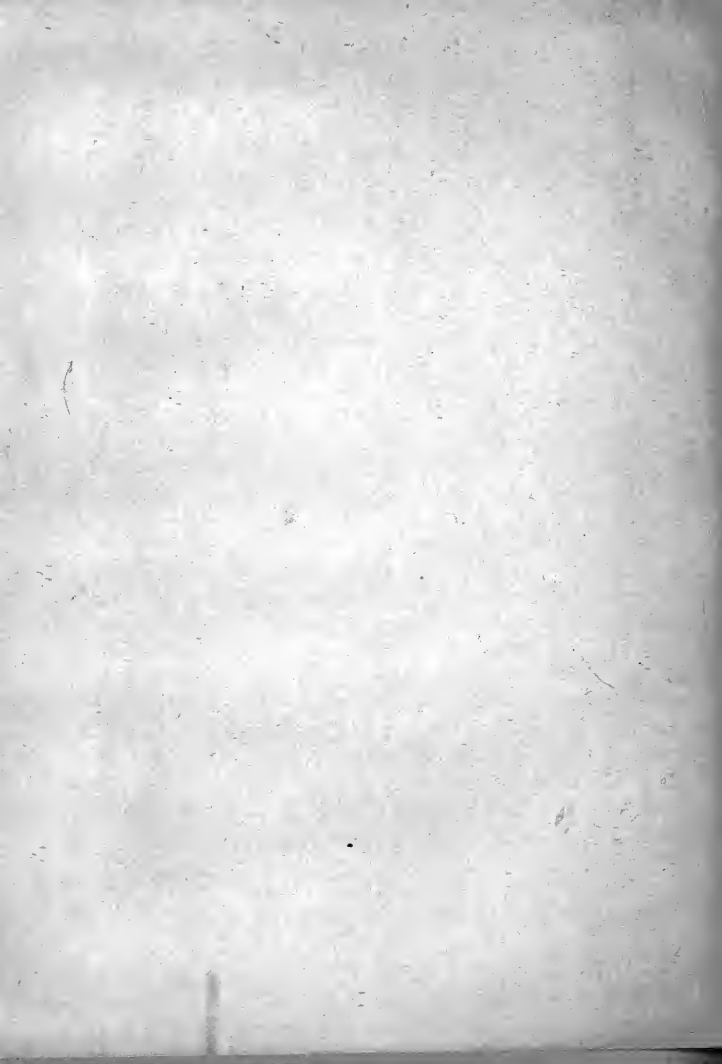
Gillray, the caricaturist, made excellent capital out of the incident, and published a "Titianus Redivivus, or the Seven Wise Men consulting the new Venetian Oracle—a Scene in y<sup>e</sup> Academic Grove." The seven artists are in the foremost seats—the chief dupes of the secrets of Miss Provis. Others are clambering up after her. A mischievous imp, resting upon a folio "List of Subscribers to the Venetian Humbug, at ten guineas the dupe," is spurning the works of Fuseli, Beechey, Louthembourg, Cosway, Sandby,

Bartolozzi, Rooker, and Turner. The figure of Sir Joshua rising from the grave expresses his amazement. Three figures in front are starting off in mistrust—West, Alderman Boydell, and Macklin as a dwarf with lottery tickets in a bag. So the work is described by Sandby. The secret of Titian's method is still, we believe, his own, and likely to remain so.

In 1798 the Royal Academy Exhibition contained eleven pictures by Hoppner, against Lawrence's six. The subjects were Lord Paget, the Countess of Clare, the Hon. Miss Chetwynd, Viscount Duncan, Mr. Canning, the Earl of Inchiquin, Lady Anne Lambton and children, the Countess of Oxford, the Hon. Mrs. E. Bouverie, Mrs. Whitbread, and Mrs. George Hibbert. It is probable that a diligent search would unearth most of these, and some of them are even now well known. The portrait of the Countess of Oxford, a very beautiful half-length, hangs in the National Gallery, to which it was bequeathed by Lady Langdale, her last surviving daughter, in 1873. An engraving was made from it by S. W. Reynolds and published in 1805. It is the only picture by Hoppner to be seen in the National Gallery, and the absence of other specimens of his work is the more to be regretted that this picture, though a fine one, is very far from showing the artist at his best. No public gallery in London contains a single picture of child life by him, and it was in this branch of his art that he most greatly excelled. Jane Elizabeth, Countess of Oxford, was married in her twentieth year to



MASTER SMITH ("THE NABOB")





the fifth Earl of Oxford, and died in 1824. Her eldest son was drowned at sea, and the peerage became extinct after the death of her surviving son, who died without issue. She herself was the daughter of a country clergyman, and was, unfortunately for herself, lovely enough to attract Lord Byron, who lacked the common decency which prompts men to keep silence regarding their victims, and he published the details of their intimacy with unblushing effrontery.

The portrait group of the Lady Anne Lambton and her children is another of Hoppner's exquisite child studies. The original picture is at Lambton Castle, and belongs to the Earl of Durham. The mother stands on the left of the picture in a somewhat conventional attitude; in front of her a little girl raises her left hand, begging her eldest brother to put up the sword which he is drawing from its scabbard; another boy stands behind him to the right, and a third boy sits in front, looking at a shoe which he has just taken off. A well-known engraving was made from this picture by John Young, and published in 1799 under the title of "Domestic Happiness."

The portrait of Lord Duncan was probably painted for his family, upon his elevation to the peerage in 1797 as a reward for the victory over the Dutch fleet off Camperdown, for which George III. had thanked him in person on board his flagship. It is a fine full-length portrait, and may be studied to advantage in James Ward's engraving, which was published about the same time that the picture was exhibited. The por-

trait of Mrs. George Hibbert is also exceedingly pleasing. That and a companion portrait of her husband, painted by Hoppner about the same time, hang in their old home at Munden. Both pictures have been well engraved by James Ward. The son of Mr. and Mrs. George Hibbert married a daughter of Sydney Smith; the other daughter married Lord Holland, and in default of Hibbert descendants the grandson of Lady Holland, the Hon. A. Holland-Hibbert, has inherited the Hibbert name and domain.

But little interest attaches to the portrait of the Hon. Mrs. E. Bouverie, although it has been made the subject of a fine colour-print by John Raphael Smith. It is not, to our mind, one of Hoppner's happiest efforts, judging, that is to say, from the colour-print, for the original has not been located. It is, however, an obvious mistake to confuse the subject of this picture with the Mrs. Bouverie so frequently painted by Sir Joshua, who belonged to an earlier generation. The latter was born in 1749 and was married in 1764, and she would hardly have preserved her youth, as the subject of this picture has done, when she was verging upon fifty. The Mrs. Bouverie of this picture was Arabella, the second daughter of Admiral Sir Chaloner Ogle, probably a relation of the second Mrs. Sheridan; she married the Hon. Edward Bouverie, youngest son of the first Earl of Radnor, in 1785; her husband died in 1824; four years later she married Richard Talbot, the son of the Baroness Talbot de Malahide, and disappears from history.

The subject of the portrait of "Mr. Canning" was, it may be presumed, the celebrated George Canning, then a young man of twenty-eight, a member of Parliament of four years' standing, and making an enduring mark as a brilliant speaker and writer. His *Anti-Jacobin*, the cleverest of political journals, had been established in the year preceding, and was running its sparkling course under the editorship of Gifford. It was doubtless to Gifford that Hoppner owed his introduction to the Tory circles in which Canning and his friends moved. By 1807 Canning had attained an acknowledged place among the statesmen of the age; and Hoppner then painted his picture at whole-length, which was engraved by John Young and duly published in 1808. This must not be confused with the half-length painted in 1798, which now belongs to Lord Granville, by whom it was shown at the National Portrait Exhibition in 1868.

The Earl of Inchiquin, whose portrait by Hoppner was exhibited this year, is chiefly remembered as the husband of Mary Palmer, the niece and heiress of Sir Joshua Reynolds, whom he married just five months after her uncle's death in 1792, from the Beaconsfield home of Edmund Burke, her guardian. He was raised to the English peerage as Marquess of Thomond in 1800, and was killed by a fall from his horse in Grosvenor Square in 1808, eleven days before the publication of the engraving by S. W. Reynolds from this portrait. It is a strong and dignified picture, but though the Marquess was evidently

a striking personality, there is no record of his possessing any tangible claim to distinction. The Thomond title is now extinct, but the family is still represented by Lord Inchiquin of the Irish peerage, and the picture is in his possession. It was exhibited by him in Dublin at the Old Masters Exhibition, 1902-3. The engraving by Reynolds shows the subject in plain clothes ; and the peer's robes in which he appears in this picture must have been painted in at a later date, perhaps in 1800 when he became Marquess of Thomond, or in 1801 when he was raised to the English peerage as Baron Thomond of Taplow.

The Mrs. Whitbread whose portrait appears in this exhibition was a daughter of Sir Charles Grey, a distinguished soldier, who was elevated to the peerage as Lord Grey of Howick in 1801, and was advanced to the dignities of Viscount Howick and Earl Grey in 1806. Accordingly this lady became in time the Lady Elizabeth Whitbread, under which title her portrait was engraved from this picture by S. W. Reynolds. The picture, though quite up to his average, is not one of Hoppner's best, and was sold in 1896 for the comparatively small sum of £546. Lady Elizabeth died in 1846. The beautiful life-size portrait of her infant daughter, Emma Laura Whitbread (afterwards Viscountess Eversley), as a child, in white frock, blue sash, coral necklace, and red shoes, was probably painted by Hoppner about this time ; it fetched at the same sale in 1896 the then more adequate price of £1,890.

It is difficult to determine exactly who the Hon.



MRS. R. B. SHERIDAN AND HER SON



Miss Chetwynd was, whose picture appeared in the exhibition of this year, but it was most likely Anderlechtia Clarissa, younger daughter of William, fourth Viscount Chetwynd of the Irish peerage, who had married Susannah, daughter of Sir Jonathan Cope of Brewerne, a near relation of the Duchess of Dorset, whose portrait and that of her children Hoppner had already painted. She married Lord Robert Seymour in 1806.

To this year we may safely assign the charming portrait of Miss Charlotte Goodall, the celebrated actress, in the character of Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows*, a translation by Mrs. Inchbald of Kotzebue's *Das Kind der Liebe*. Students of Miss Austen will remember the scene in *Mansfield Park* associated with this once-popular piece. The subject is represented at three-quarter length, in male attire, a style of dress which seems to have had an attraction for her, as she is recorded to have played Adeline in *The Battle of Hexham*, and another picture shows her perusing a manuscript of *As You Like It*. The portrait as shown in Henry Cooke's engraving is an exceedingly pretty one, and a sight of the vanished original would be most welcome.

A portrait of Colonel the Hon. John Hope, afterwards fourth Earl of Hopetoun, is dated this year, and may be presumed to be in possession of Lord Linlithgow. It is a half-length military portrait, somewhat formal, but by no means lacking in character. It was engraved by John Young. There is another fine picture extant of Colonel John Hope, a full-length, by Raeburn, which

throws Hoppner's work into the shade. Yet another portrait produced about this time is that of Sir William Mordaunt Milner, Lord Mayor and M.P. for the city of York, which was painted for the Corporation of York, and is still in possession of that august body. Hoppner seems to have had little sympathy with this type of humanity, though the fault was probably more in the subjects than in the artist.

The beautiful portrait of Charlotte Maria, Countess of Euston, is also dated this year. In Wilkin's engraving it forms one of *The Select Series of Ladies of Rank and Fashion*, to which reference has already been made, and it is one of the most attractive of the series. The face has not the faultless beauty and force of character of that of Lady Charlotte Legge, but it is full of charm—the charm of an English lady, who has no doubts as to her natural right to the position she occupies, or of her capacity to fill it worthily, yet marked the while by that gracious courtliness and kindly condescension which is so conspicuous in the great ladies of that age, if the witness of their portraits be true. Lady Euston has a special interest for us in that she was one of the beautiful trio of Waldegrave girls whom Reynolds had painted for their great-uncle, Horace Walpole, eighteen years previously. The likeness between her and the girl who sits on the left of Sir Joshua's picture is clearly decipherable, and one feels that time and a sweet disposition have dealt kindly with her. She was a great favourite of her celebrated uncle, who wrote of her: "I do



not know so perfect a young woman ; she has all her father's sense and temper, and the utmost discretion " ; and he speaks elsewhere of " the dignity of her conduct on the wretched behaviour of Lord Egremont," who had apparently jilted her. She married, in 1784, George, Earl of Euston, afterwards fourth Duke of Grafton, against the wishes of his father, who afterwards gave way handsomely ; but she died in 1808, three years before her husband succeeded to the dukedom. Her mother, the beautiful Countess Waldegrave, had been left a widow young, and married, in 1766, the Duke of Gloucester, a brother of George III, and Hoppner painted her in later life, as well as the Princess Sophia Matilda, a daughter of the Duchess by this second marriage.

We may assign to the same year the portrait of Sir Richard Carr Glyn, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1798, and is here portrayed in his robes of office, with the mace and sword on the table beside him—a truly official person, such as Charles Lamb always dreaded being taken for. The subject was an eminent banker, who was created a baronet in 1800. W. Say's engraving, on which he is entitled a baronet, did not appear until 1804 ; but this need not be taken as fixing the date of the picture, as it is much more likely that the worthy banker was painted during his year of office in the first proud flush of his mayoral dignity. This picture is in all probability in possession of his descendants.

The beautiful portrait of the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of Frederick, fifth Earl of

Carlisle, a rather misleading engraving of which, by Wilkin, appears in *The Select Series of Ladies of Rank and Fashion* aforesaid, must also have been painted about this year, as the subject of it became Duchess of Rutland in April, 1799, in which capacity she was again painted by Hoppner some years later. The original picture remained in possession of the Carlisle family until after 1891, when it was shown at the Guelph Exhibition; but since that time it has passed into the hands of a private collector, by whom it was exhibited at the Paris Exhibition, 1900, and also at Birmingham in 1903. On the former occasion it was justly described as "uncommon in its treatment and masterly in its loose artistic work . . . an attractive English face, painted without aid of jewel or ornament, making a lovely picture."

The Lady Elizabeth Howard was only eighteen when this picture was painted, and appears therein to advantage, as pleasant a specimen of English girlhood as one could wish to see, though her face was not of the same artistic and delicate type as that of her father, whose portrait Hoppner had painted in the previous year.

To judge from the costume, we should assign to this period the powerful portrait of Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, one of Hoppner's most striking works. It is a half-length, and shows a face marked by much character and originality, not beautiful, but far from unattractive. The picture belongs to Lord Chesham. The portrait of Admiral Lord Keith, now home from the capture of Capetown with his blushing honours thick

upon him, and newly raised to the peerage, was also probably painted this year. It is a conventional portrait, and the face is scarcely as strong as one would have expected in so tough a fighter. But it has character, nevertheless, and Hoppner had no cause to be ashamed of the work, though it can hardly be ranked among his masterpieces. Lord Keith's second wife, whom he married in 1808, was a daughter of Mrs. Thrale, the friend of Johnson. The peerage became extinct, and the family is now represented by the Marquess of Lansdowne, in whose possession the picture may be presumed to be.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME GREAT PORTRAITS

1799-1800

1799, the Duchess-Countess—"Mr. Boswell"—Viscountess Melbourne—The Earl of Chatham—Mrs. Arbuthnot—Did our great-grandmothers prefer to seem "fast"?—Bad times—Lady Andover—Lady Langham—Lady Georgiana Gordon—Lady Anne Culling Smith and daughters—Paulet Mildmay—The Bishop of Bangor—1800, Hoppner's grand climacteric—Indications of chronic illness—Production unequal and irregular henceforth.

TO the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1799 Hoppner sent eight pictures against Lawrence's six. The Countess of Sutherland, whose portrait is first on the list, was Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland in her own right, the "Duchess-Countess," whose marriage with the Marquess of Stafford transferred the title to her descendants by him. The picture has not been engraved, and now belongs to the Duke of Sutherland, by whom it was shown at Birmingham in 1903. It is a powerful and striking work, and must be ranked among Hoppner's masterpieces; broadly painted, in a style which would now be termed "impressionist," an artistic face full of character and determination, expressing perfectly the woman who was at once a feudal chieftainess, who could



THE LADIES CATHERINE AND SARAH BLIGH



raise a regiment (now the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) from her own retainers; a great lady who knew her position and could hold it; and a cultivated artist of much more than common merit. Mrs. Orby Hunter comes next; she was a sister of the unhappy beauty, Mrs. Musters, whom Reynolds had painted, to whom she must have been many years junior. An engraving of this picture by John Young, published in 1800, is extant, and the original picture belongs to Sir George Wombwell, her descendant. After her comes the Archbishop of York, Dr. Markham, whose portrait is still to be seen in the Royal Collection; and after him "Mr. Boswell," not, alas! "Bozzy" of famous memory, but another person of the same name, perhaps his younger son, James, who was at this time making his mark as a *littérateur*, editing a *Variorum Shakespeare* and what not.

After him comes the Viscountess Melbourne, wife of Peniston, first Viscount Melbourne, and mother of the statesman who piloted Queen Victoria's youthful footsteps into the difficult paths of statecraft. No details of the picture are available, but the original may still be in possession of the Milbanke family, from which she sprang. The portrait of the Duke of Rutland, which follows, is at Belvoir. The half-length portrait of John, Earl of Chatham, which is next on the list, is remarkable for the likeness of the subject to William Pitt, his younger and more famous brother, to whom he behaved with such exemplary devotion. Except in this respect

it was not a striking portrait. Pitt's was a face which it was only too easy to caricature, and the likeness to himself in this portrait of his elder brother lacks just that gracious somewhat which in himself so impressed all who saw him. With this nobleman expired the last of the titles in the Pitt family, which had formerly boasted four of them. The picture has been engraved by Valentine Green ; the original is in the possession of Sir Henry Bellingham, to whose ancestor it was given by Lord Chatham. It was shown at the Royal Hibernian Academy Old Masters Exhibition, 1902-3. Last of all is Mrs. Arbuthnot, wife of the Right Hon. Charles Arbuthnot, one of the subordinate political figures of the day, whose portrait Hoppner painted for the second time, and exhibited in the following year. This picture, which is a very charming one, was engraved by S. W. Reynolds.

Judging from the Academy list alone, it would seem that Hoppner's usual throng of young and beautiful sitters had deserted him. With the exception of the Duchess-Countess and, perhaps, of Mrs. Arbuthnot, not one of the ladies enumerated above had the slightest pretension to youth or good looks ; all of them, in fact, had been married some years, and one, at least, had touched the age of fifty. The biographers of the artist, from Allan Cunningham downwards, have found a reason for this in Hoppner's injudicious, if truthful, observation regarding the suggestiveness which Lawrence was wont to infuse into his portraits of women, an indiscretion which, on



the principle that "every woman is at heart a rake," is held to have driven the beauty and fashion of the day incontinently into Lawrence's studio, all goaded by a yearning to be painted with some suggestion of impropriety.

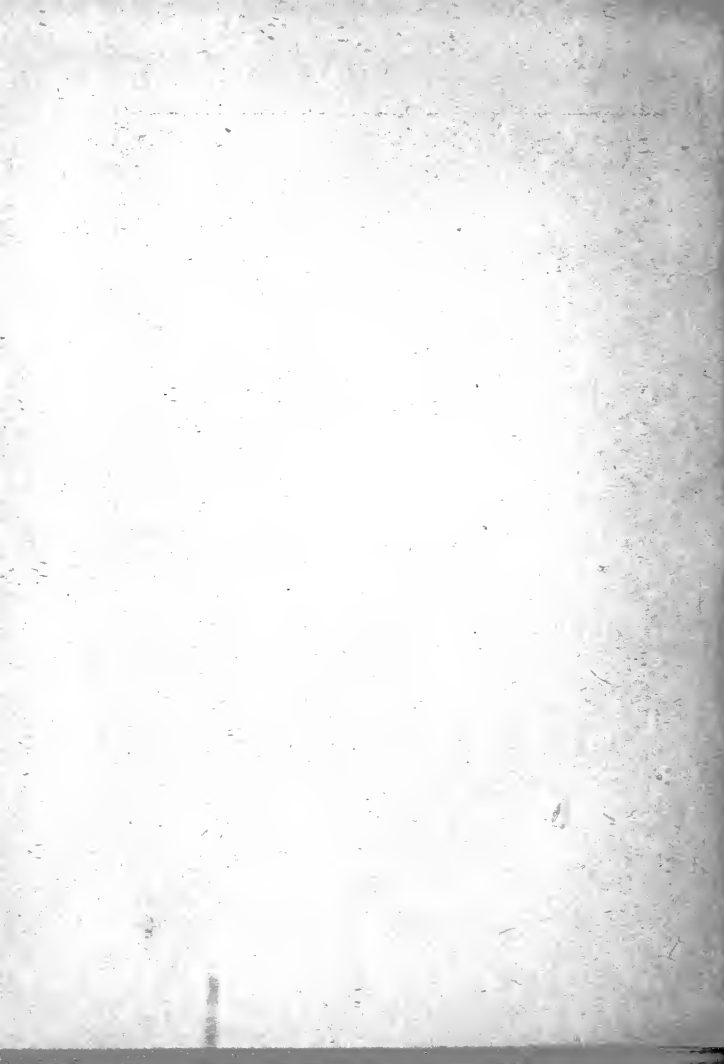
But the biographers have overlooked one or two important points. In the first place, Lawrence fared as badly, indeed perceptibly worse, in this particular exhibition than did Hoppner, and the number of his exhibited pictures in this year is considerably smaller than that of his rival. In the next place, although it is undeniable that Hoppner did not exhibit his usual tale of beauties, he certainly painted two of his finest efforts in this direction during this very year—namely, the beautiful portraits of Lady Andover and Lady Langham, which were subsequently included in *The Select Series*, to which reference has already been made, and the years that followed had also several masterpieces of this kind to show. To us it seems more probable that the badness of the times had more to do with the falling off in the number of his sitters than anything else, and that it is not necessary to saddle our staid great-grandmothers with any desire to go down to posterity as "fast" women—to make use of a phrase with which they were probably unacquainted. The nation was then in the throes of the life-and-death struggle with Napoleon; Pitt had exhausted, as it seemed, every available means of taxation, and had been reduced to appealing for voluntary contributions, by which he succeeded in raising no less a sum than two millions—a great matter in

those days. Since 1796 all assessed taxes had been trebled, and an income-tax introduced for the first time, to the extent of one-tenth of all incomes over £200, when the trebling of the assessed taxes failed to raise the necessary funds for carrying on the struggle. It is true that commerce steadily increased during this period, but that only throws into stronger relief the fact that the incidence of taxation must have told most severely upon the landed aristocracy, who had no means of supplementing their income, and must, besides, have borne no small part of the burden of the war by sending their sons into the fighting line and maintaining them there, the pay of the military services being as inadequate then as ever it was. In such circumstances it is not surprising that people thought twice before having the portraits of their wives and daughters painted by fashionable artists, however competent. There is no need to invoke the successful rivalry of Lawrence to explain the falling off in Hoppner's sitters at this time.

The portraits of Lady Andover and Lady Langham are worthy of their places in Wilkin's volume. That of Lady Andover shows a wholesome English girl, not of the most refined type, but quite honest and good to look upon. She was a daughter of Thomas Coke of Holkham, afterwards Earl of Leicester, and had married Lord Andover three years previously in 1796. Her husband was killed by an accident in 1800, and in 1806 she married Admiral Sir Henry Digby, and lived until 1863. She was twenty-two when this picture was



THE HQN. MISS GRIMSTON ("PSYCHE")



painted. The picture is in all probability at the family seat of the Earl of Suffolk, near Malmesbury.

Lady Langham's is one of Hoppner's happiest portraits, and Wilkin's engraving is a very free and inadequate rendering of it. It is a far more beautiful face than that of Lady Andover, the features are more shapely and delicate, and the *tout ensemble* more suggestive of high breeding and refinement. The figure possesses a grace, too, that is wanting in Lady Andover, posed as it is on the edge of a cliff in a high wind, with the sea spread out below. The subject was Henrietta, daughter and heiress of the Hon. Charles Vane of Mount Ida, Norfolk, and niece of the first Earl of Darlington; she had married Sir William Langham in 1795, and lived until 1809. The original picture was sold in 1894 for 400 guineas, an extraordinarily small price, judged by present values of Hoppner's pictures. It was exhibited not long since at Messrs. Agnew's.

Lady Georgiana Gordon heads the list of female portraits sent by Hoppner to the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1800, and the list also includes the Hon. Miss Harris, Mrs. Arbuthnot, Lady Paget, and the Princess of Wales. A child group was that of the children of the Earl of Sefton. The male portraits were those of the Prince of Orange and Lord Grenville. And this list was very far from exhausting his work for the year of which the records have come down to us. The number of pictures here exhibited by Hoppner was eight against Lawrence's seven.

The portrait of Lady Georgiana Gordon is a fine full-length figure of a young woman, not beautiful, but most natural and pleasant looking, clad in a high-waisted white dress, advancing towards the spectator ; her left hand holds up her dress, her right hand is behind her, and the background is made up of trees and landscape in Hoppner's favourite manner. The picture was engraved by S. W. Reynolds, and published in 1803 as "Her Grace the Duchess of Bedford." The subject was a daughter of the fourth Duke of Gordon (the family is now represented by the Marquess of Huntly), and she married John, sixth Duke of Bedford, in 1803. She was nineteen when this picture was painted, and lived until 1853. This picture must not be confused with that of Lady Gordon by Hoppner, which changed hands in 1895 for £1,144 10s., and was probably painted in the following year.

Of the picture of the children of the Earl of Sefton no particulars are available : it may still be in possession of the family. Neither is anything known of the portraits of the Princess of Wales and the Prince of Orange. The Hon. Miss Harris was probably Frances, younger daughter of the first Earl of Malmesbury, to which dignity he was advanced from the barony, which he had held since 1788, in the course of this year (1800). The family may still possess this picture. She was *not* a daughter of the famous general, Lord Harris, who was not raised to the peerage until fifteen years later. Of Mrs. Arbuthnot we have already spoken : no descrip-

tion is available of this picture. Nor is that of Lady Paget known to us: she was in all probability a younger daughter of the first Earl of Uxbridge, but there is no means of identifying her further. The picture may still be in possession of some member of the Paget family. The portrait of William Wyndham Grenville, first Lord Grenville, hangs alongside of that of his great colleague, William Pitt, in the National Portrait Gallery. It is a good, but far from monumental work.

These, however, do not exhaust the list of pictures which Hoppner must have painted about this time. The beautiful group of Lady Anne Culling Smith and her daughters, which is one of the gems of the fine collection at Apsley House, cannot have been painted later than now. The subject was a daughter of Garrett, first Earl of Mornington, and sister of the Great Duke of Wellington, a famous beauty in her day, who married in 1790 the Hon. Henry Fitzroy, a son of the Earl of Southampton. She was left a widow with two children, the girls who appear in this picture, in 1794; and in 1799 she married Charles Culling Smith, son of Charles Smith, Governor of Madras, and nephew of Sir Culling Smith, who was known as "the Nabob," a rich Anglo-Indian and one of the survivors of the horrors of the Black Hole at Calcutta. A somewhat tangled relationship was created by the marriage of a daughter of Lady Anne's by her second husband to the Duke of Beaufort, whose first wife had been a daughter of the same mother

by her first husband, one of the children in this picture in fact. It is not unlikely that the "Master Smith" exhibited in the Academy of 1805, and afterwards engraved under the title of "The Nabob," was Frederick, Lady Anne's son by this second marriage, but of this more anon.

The picture is generally acknowledged to be one of Hoppner's finest works. Redgrave writes of it: "The head of the mother, which is very tender and sweet, would not have been painted had there been no Reynolds"—an extraordinary criticism surely, for nothing was ever less reminiscent of Reynolds than this perfectly natural and unaffected group with its absolute disregard of convention. The two children are in Hoppner's happiest vein, and there are a simplicity and picturesqueness in the type of costume chosen, that of the Irish peasantry, with the touch of pathos—the "thoughts which do lie too deep for tears"—which it lends to the children especially, that mark the essential artist who must be also a poet. How the picture came to be left unfinished is not recorded; possibly it was painted before Lady Anne's betrothal to her second husband, and was laid aside when she married him (in which case it would have to be antedated by a year or so), but little is lost by the omission; no true lover of art would have it other than it is. It was last shown in public at the Royal Academy Old Masters Exhibition in 1886.

Two other portraits painted about this year are those of William Gifford and Paulet St. John Mildmay, marking very distinctly the opposite





‘LOVE ME, LOVE MY DOG’ (MISS ARABELLA JANE WILMOT)



poles of political society in which Hoppner mixed. William Gifford was the friend and fellow-worker of Canning and the Tories: Paulet Mildmay, in later years the constant host of Sydney Smith and his Whig circle. The portrait of Gifford is that which is now in the possession of Mr. John Murray; it hangs in the historic dining-room at Albemarle Street, and was engraved as a frontispiece to Gifford's verse translation of Juvenal, a good and characteristic work. Gifford's was a singular face, expressive at once of the sensitive, artistic, and scholarly temperament which made him, in spite of all the obstacles of his early life, the fine critic and scholar that he became; indicative, too, of the dash of real poetry in his intellectual equipment which raised some, at least, of his verse considerably above the level of melodious mediocrity. But it tells, too, that the iron had in some measure entered into his soul, and the biting and merciless contempt with which he knew so well how to "draw blood," when in his opinion the occasion demanded it, is clearly decipherable. That Gifford was a good friend and a bad enemy appears in every line of the picture. But Hoppner knew and loved him as a good friend, and the better angel is allowed a distinct and pleasing predominance. It is customary in these days to abuse Gifford freely, but Hoppner's portraits give a very opposite and probably much truer impression. It is hard that a respectable man should be condemned out of the mouths of Pasquin and Peter Pindar, even though misfortune, if not conviction, made him a Tory.

The portrait of little Paulet Mildmay is one of the delightful child-pictures which Hoppner knew so well how to produce. It is a full-length figure of a little lad of nine years old or so, leaning against a stile and facing the spectator ; his long hair falls over his shoulders, and he is arrayed in the quaint costume of the period—nankeen trousers, blue coat, and broad white collar. The picture was last shown in the Royal Academy Old Masters Exhibition, 1893, and is in possession of one of his descendants. The subject was a son of Sir Henry Paulet St. John Mildmay ; a "Portrait of Lady Mildmay and Child" was exhibited in the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1803, and probably represented his wife and a younger member of his family. A picture of unknown date, that of "Master White," shown by Lord Burton at the Royal Academy Old Masters Exhibition in 1894, is so exactly similar in the details of attire that it may safely be assigned to this period. It is a large-sized painting, about 70 inches by 45 inches, and shows a little lad at full length in a landscape, dressed like Paulet Mildmay, holding an Indian bow and arrows. Here, too, Hoppner's peculiar mastery of this branch of his art is very evident.

A three-quarter length portrait of George Capel Coningsby, fifth Earl of Essex, afterwards engraved by Charles Turner, is noted on the engraving as having been painted in this year. The original is probably in possession of his descendants at Cassiobury Park. It is a good and conscientious piece of work, but not otherwise remarkable. The excellent portrait of

William Cleaver, Bishop of Bangor, is also said to have been painted in this year, probably on his preferment to the bishopric of Bangor. It is a three-quarter length, the subject is seated in his episcopal robes, with a college building in the distance to the left. It is an official portrait, and the original is in the possession of the Dean and Chapter of Bangor, while a replica hangs at St. Asaph, painted when the Bishop was translated to that see. There is considerable character in the face—keen, strong, reliable, and not irreligious, a type which is not usually associated with the clerical dignitaries of the Georgian period. The picture was engraved by James Ward. This was the bishop of whom De Quincy fell foul, but he afterwards acknowledged the Bishop's merits.

To this year, too, we may assign the portrait of Lord Hugh Seymour, son of Francis, first Marquess of Hertford, known to us in S. W. Reynolds's engraving. The subject was a distinguished naval officer with the rank of admiral, who died in 1801. He is shown at short half-length, in an oval frame, bareheaded, and in naval uniform. The only other portraits definitely assignable to this year are those of the Right Hon. William Dundas, Sir Philip Francis, and Robert Bloomfield. The first of these survives in S. W. Reynolds's engraving, published in 1801; it is not a remarkable work, and the fact that the original has not been traced need not be regretted overmuch. The portrait of Sir Philip Francis was painted in that worthy's sixtieth year, and was

last exhibited at the National Portrait Exhibition in 1867 by one of his descendants. That of Robert Bloomfield, the inspired shoemaker, must have been painted about this time, when his poem, *The Farmer's Boy*, was attracting the notice of the literary world. His vogue was a brief one, so that the margin of error in fixing this date is not large. The portrait shows an earnest face with wistful eyes and a forehead of some ability, but limitations are suggested by the mouth ; it is the work of a real artist. The picture was last shown by Mr. Percival Boxall in the National Portrait Exhibition, 1868.

Perhaps we should regard this year, 1800, as the close of Hoppner's grand climacteric. His best work was done, though the years that were left him produced much that was admirable. Indications of the illness, which carried him off, are now visible and referred to by his contemporaries. During the next two years, though he was certainly far from idle, he painted one picture only that he thought worthy of a place on the walls of the Royal Academy. Nine years still remained to him, but his work henceforward was irregular, and generally cast in a graver mould ; his mastery of colour and graceful composition remained to the last, but the old effortless lyrical touch was vanishing, to reappear but seldom and at ever-lengthening intervals.



MISS LINLEY





## CHAPTER IX

### BEGINNINGS OF ILL-HEALTH

1801-1804

1801, nothing by Hoppner at the Royal Academy—Relations with the Darnley family—Edward, afterwards fifth Lord Darnley—Lady Darnley and her daughter—Henry Thornton and the “Clapham Sect”—Thomas Graham of Balgowan—“Scene from *Cymbeline*”—Lady Heathcote as Hebe—Altered in deference to the engraver—1802, Peace of Amiens and the visit to Paris—1803, eight pictures in the Royal Academy—“Psyche”—“Love me, love my dog”—Miss Cholmondeley—The Countess of Cholmondeley and her children—The great portrait of Lord Nelson—Portraits of Lady Douglas and Miss Pollok—The Archbishop of Narbonne.

IN the year 1801 Hoppner executed several works of which there was no need to be ashamed, and possibly one masterpiece. Among the portraits which must have been painted about this time are those of Lord Spencer, Henry Thornton, Colonel Thomas Graham (afterwards Lord Lynedoch), Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, and, best of all, the exquisite portrait of Edward, afterwards fifth Earl of Darnley, son of the beautiful Countess of Darnley, whom Hoppner had painted about five years earlier, and perhaps again with her baby daughter in this same year. Serious ill-health there must have been to have prevented

Hoppner from holding his own on the walls of the Academy against the rival whom he detested so heartily, but his hand had certainly not lost its cunning, and the list above quoted is far from exhausting his output during this year.

Hoppner's relations with the Darnley family would seem to have been exceptionally cordial, and the collection of portraits by him at Cobham Hall is probably larger and finer than that at any house in England. In the picture of the Countess of Darnley which belongs to Mr. Brownlow occurs one of the rare local touches in Hoppner's pictures, the cupolas of Cobham Hall showing among the trees on the left—a possibility of artistic effect which it would be difficult to overlook ; and in the picture of Lord Darnley's sisters there is a charming glimpse of the reach of the river at Gravesend, as it might be seen from Cobham Park or the near neighbourhood. In Edward, the youthful heir of the house, he had a subject after his own heart. The little fellow stands in the quaint costume of the day, leaning against a grassy bank with his hands behind him, looking the spectator fearlessly in the eyes ; a rosy-cheeked, wholesome specimen of English boyhood of the best and most attractive type ; and the portrait painted of him by Phillips, a few years later, when he was an Eton boy, shows that he still retained his charm. One wonders if these pictures saw him carried by on that dark February day, stricken down by accident in the prime of his manhood, as his destiny was, to die untimely in his ancient home. The portrait of Lady Darnley and her little girl,

probably painted in this same year, has suffered more from time than any of the others, but the faces remain curiously undimmed and unaffected, and that of the little girl, standing on her mother's lap, is quite irresistible in its wide-eyed innocence.

The portrait of Lord Spencer (George John, second earl), is known to us only through the fine engraving by S. W. Reynolds, though even in this it is not so striking as that which Hoppner painted of the same subject eight years later. Lord Spencer was the father of Lord Althorp, the early friend of Lord Macaulay, who made so deep a mark upon early Victorian politics. Henry Thornton, whose portrait still hangs, along with those of his wife and another relative, in his old home at Clapham, was a sturdy anti-slavery man, one of the leaders of the "Clapham Sect," the intimate friend of Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay and others who devoted their lives and energies to that uphill cause. Hoppner had already painted Mrs. Thornton, Thomas Babington, and others of this strenuous coterie, with whom he seems to have established something of an intimacy, and a portrait of Hannah More, said with great probability to be by him, was sold in 1902 for five guineas. His portrait of Henry Thornton, which some critics have called "wooden," shows a strong, characteristic face; it succeeds in catching something of the patient persistence which certainly distinguished the man, and it is impressive accordingly. Thomas Graham of Balgowan was another remarkable man, though in a different sphere. He was a quiet Scotch laird, a fine linguist, and

magnificent athlete, who, to drown remembrance of the tragic loss of his wife (the beautiful Mrs. Graham of Gainsborough's famous picture), raised a regiment for service in the Peninsula, and himself taking command of it, developed unsuspected military abilities, and achieved considerable success in the field, which ultimately won him substantive service rank and a peerage. Hoppner's portrait, as reproduced in S. W. Reynolds's mezzotint, shows a simple, strong face, and impresses one as a good piece of work, which makes one the more regret the disappearance of the original. Sir William Watkin Williams Wynn was not a man of special mark, but Hoppner's portrait of him suggests potentialities not realised. The original is in possession of the family, and Reynolds has executed a fine mezzotint from it. Hoppner did two studies of Sir William and one of Lady Wynn, which were sold after his death.

Other virile portraits which may be assigned to this year are those of Henry Phipps, first Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Marquess of Normanby, engraved by S. W. Reynolds; Thomas, Lord Pelham (afterwards Earl of Chichester), engraved by S. W. Reynolds; Frederick William, Lord Hervey, engraved by John Young; Thomas Egerton, first Earl of Wilton, engraved by Charles Turner; and Lord Clare, also engraved by Charles Turner. Two other pictures produced at this time are the portrait of Lady Gordon of Letterfourie, sold at Christie's in 1895 for £1,144 10s., and the "Scene from *Cymbeline*," painted for the Boydell Gallery. The latter was engraved by



EDWARD, AFTERWARDS FIFTH EARL OF DARNLEY



Robert Thew. It is a somewhat conventional, though far from spiritless, piece of work; the landscape is bold and interesting, but its principal interest lies in the probability that Mrs. Hoppner furnished the model for Imogen, perhaps the last time she figured in such a capacity. The likeness is quite distinguishable.

The Royal Academy Exhibition of the following year (1802) contained but one picture from Hoppner, while Lawrence sent in nine. That one picture is noted in the catalogue as "Mary," and nothing, we believe, is known of it. But he did other work in this year, and one of these pictures, that of Mrs. Pearson at the age of eighteen, which was exhibited at the Guildhall in 1902, was certainly quite up to the standard of the Academy in that age and beyond it in this. The other pictures traceable to 1802 are the portraits of Robert, Earl of Grosvenor, and Thomas Grosvenor (both at Eaton Hall); the Right Hon. William Windham, engraved by W. Say; and one of Louisa, Duchess of St. Albans, which was sold in 1901 for £252, besides a portrait of Lord Nelson, painted after the Battle of Copenhagen, afterwards engraved by Charles Turner, which, after passing through various hands, was sold in 1895 for £2,677. About now, too, he must have painted the rather poor portrait of Lady Heathcote as Hebe, recalling that of Lady Jerningham in the same character painted two years earlier. It is conventional, with the inevitable properties of clouds, thunderbolts, etc., and is not calculated to arouse enthusiasm. James Ward, who en-

graved it, termed it with justice "one of the artist's slightest efforts," and persuaded Hoppner to alter it to accord with the engraving—a singular and quite unique concession. The subject was the Lady Katherine Sophia, fourth daughter of the Lady Louisa Manners (afterwards Countess of Dysart) of Hoppner's famous picture; she married Sir Gilbert Heathcote in 1793, whose family is now represented by the Earl of Ancaster, and the picture is probably in possession of the latter. These, however, are all the pictures assignable to this year, which must accordingly be accounted a barren one in quality and quantity alike. No doubt ill-health was largely responsible for this.

In March of this same year the Peace of Amiens was signed, and Paris again thrown open to the artistic world, which was not slow to take advantage of its opportunities. Sir Martin Shee, the friend and younger contemporary of Hoppner, tells in his journal how he met Hoppner with several other artists—West, Cosway, Turner, Fuseli—and Rogers (the poet), and others at Paris in September, and of their junketings and sight-seeing there. Gifford, too, was probably of the party, for he seems to make a reference to this trip in his obituary notice of Hoppner. Shee and Hoppner attended the Louvre to see the First Consul, and West gave a public breakfast, at which, in addition to the artists, the lovely Countess of Oxford and other fashionable persons were present. Hoppner, it will be remembered, had painted this lady's portrait a few years

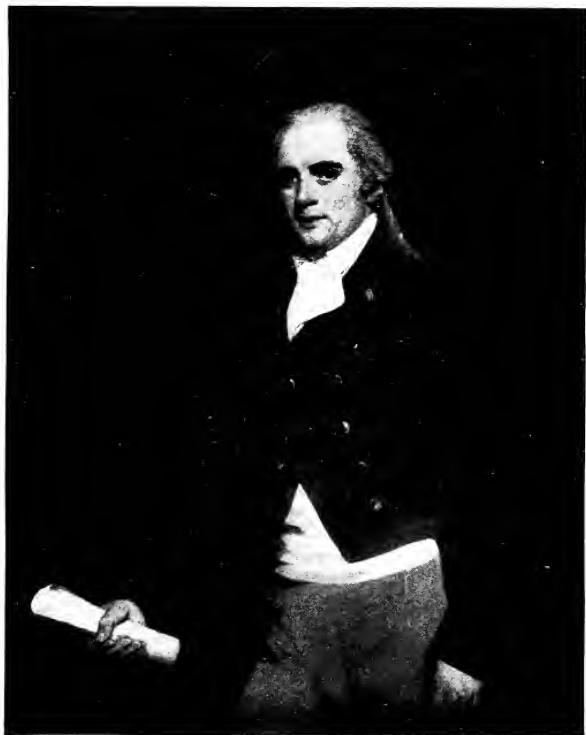


previously. The journey to Paris in that leisurely age took, it is noted, five days!

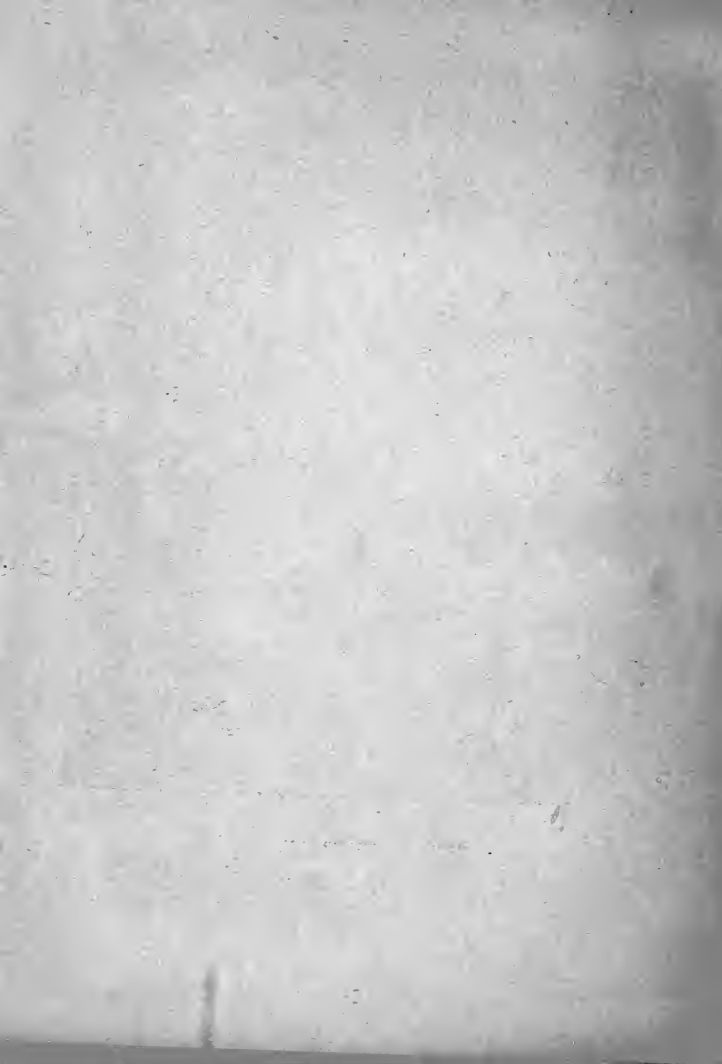
It is but a passing glimpse that we get of this outing, but Hoppner seems to have returned from it to set to work with renewed vigour. The Royal Academy Exhibition of 1803 contained eight pictures from him, some of them quite up to the standard of his best days. The portrait of Miss Grimston, in spite of its cumbrous title, "Psyche's Return from the Infernal Shades with the Box of Beauty," is a beautiful work, and may be studied to advantage in Henry Meyer's delicate stipple engraving. The original was exhibited by Mrs. Frederick Paget at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1884. The picture is not a faultless one, and it would be easy to point out mistakes of proportion and such like, but the face is exquisite, at once spirited and lovely, and the grace of pose and the harmony and brilliancy of colouring show Hoppner at his best. The portrait of Lady Mildmay and her child are best known in W. Say's engraving. Clint has made accessible for us the pretty picture of Arabella Jane Wilmot with her arm round a noble spaniel, under the title of "Love me, love my dog," a very delightful work, of which one would like to see the vanished original. An engraving by J. H. Meyer after Hoppner of a child in white holding a dog back from going into the stream—a manuscript endorsement calls it "Going after the other shoe"—is also extant, bearing date 1805, so that the picture from which it is taken must have been painted about this time. Perhaps

it is that which was sold in the Murietta sale in 1892. It is a pretty child face, quite in Hoppner's characteristic style, but the dog and the landscape as shown in the engraving are very poor, and from the fact that we have only met with two copies of the engraving (one of them a proof) it may have been considered inadequate and suppressed accordingly. Certainly Hoppner was incapable of painting such trees as appear in it, and the dog, too, would not be creditable to him.

The other portraits sent by Hoppner to this exhibition were Lady Grenville, the Bishops of Durham and Carlisle, the son of H. Davison, Esq., and Lady E. Bligh. This last is probably the pretty picture at Cobham Hall, which has suffered rather from time; the likeness of the Bishop of Carlisle (the Hon. Edward Venables Vernon Harcourt) is probably in possession of his descendants; that of Lady Grenville still hangs in her old home at Dropmore, whence it emerged to grace the National Portrait Exhibition in 1868; and Mr. Davison's son remains unidentified and untraced. It is recorded against the Bishop of Durham (Shute Barrington) that he was only prevented from permitting the destruction of the beautiful Galilee to make a carriage drive to the Cathedral by the determined resistance of the Dean and Chapter; but his nobler title to fame rests upon the procurement at his own expense of the charter of the Clergy Orphan Corporation, whose splendid girls' school, St. Margaret's, now crowns the Hertfordshire hills at Bushey. The portrait is still in possession of Lord Shute, who



HENRY THORNTON, M.P.



lent it for exhibition along with Lady Grenville's in 1868.

In addition to the pictures sent to the exhibition, however, Hoppner painted others during this year. There was the fascinating and lovely portrait of Margaret Emma, Lady Kenyon, shown at the Grafton Galleries in 1894; the fine portrait of John Russell, sixth Duke of Bedford, now at Woburn Abbey; that of the Right Hon. William Windham, engraved by S. W. Reynolds, now in possession of the Norwich Corporation; those of the Marquess of Cornwallis and Francis, Earl of Moira, known to us in Meyer's and Bartolozzi's engravings; and that of Sir Thomas Metcalfe, engraved by William Ward. There is another portrait of Lord Cornwallis by Hoppner, slightly different from that just mentioned, which was engraved by Hall for John Murray in 1858, and may have been painted about now. Without possessing many distinctive features (though Lady Kenyon's portrait will rank very high among his achievements), these form a fine series of portraits, well worthy of Hoppner's reputation. Probably, too, the portrait of the Duke of Kent, now in the Royal Collection, was painted this year upon his return from Gibraltar. It has suffered greatly from time.

In the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1804 Hoppner was represented by one portrait only, but that a very fine one—the exquisite picture of Miss Cholmondeley, a young lady whose identity is doubtful, as she does not appear to be one of Lord Cholmondeley's family. The child is simply

dressed in white, without elaboration or affectation; she holds up her frock with its lapful of flowers with her left hand, her right is outstretched as if in greeting, as she steps across the stream at her feet; behind her stretches a pleasant landscape. The face is beautiful, but apart from that there is in it that irresistible, pathetic quality of childhood which Hoppner knew so well how to express, and the picture, once seen, is not easily forgotten. It is known to the world only through the fine engraving by Charles Turner, which was published in March of this year, so that, although the picture was only exhibited in the Academy of 1804, it was presumably painted at least some months earlier.

Hoppner probably painted the fine picture of the Countess of Cholmondeley and her son about the same time; it, too, was engraved by Turner, and was published in July, 1805. The Countess stands at full length, leaning against a pedestal surmounted by a vase, her feet are crossed, she wears a flowing white dress with high waist, open at the neck, and her left hand rests on her little son, who looks to the front, his hand full of flowers, dressed in a white, high-waisted frock. It is a fine picture, though not so irresistible as that of the little girl just noticed. The boy must have been her second son, William Hugh, afterwards third marquess, who was born in August, 1800, and succeeded to the title in 1870. This picture is at Houghton. It is noteworthy that this boy afterwards married the daughter

of Mrs. Arbuthnot, whom Hoppner had twice painted in past years.

Another beautiful child portrait painted in this year is that of William, son of the Lord William Russell who was murdered by his valet, Courvoisier, in 1840. The picture was at one time in Lord Northbrook's collection, and it was last heard of in the Price sale in 1895, when it changed hands for £1,050. The little fellow is painted at three-quarter length; he is dressed simply in white, his left hand clasps his frock, while he holds his right behind him, and he has short, curly hair. The engraving by S. W. Reynolds, published in 1808, catches the spirit of the picture very well. The subject of it was born in 1800, and he lived to become the Accountant-General of the Court of Chancery and a highly respected and properly prosaic member of society.

To this year must be assigned the great full-length portrait of Lord Nelson—perhaps the most satisfactory portrait ever painted of him—which is now in the Royal Collection. The hero is posed, perhaps by way of compliment, in very similar fashion and with similar surroundings to the portrait of the Duke of Clarence painted in 1792, in the uniform of Lord High Admiral of England. But this is much the more powerful work, as it is the finer subject, and Hoppner has, one realises, caught and fixed the noblest part of his sitter. There is a long-enduring quality about the hero as he expresses him, an almost lazy gentleness, yet with infinite possibilities of fiery energy and prompt decision—a man whom one

might well love, but would scarcely care to provoke. Hoppner always seems to have had a special sympathy with these strong men of action, and none of his male portraits are more successful than those of the fighting men of that strangely mingled age, such as Abercromby, Jervis, and Nelson. The picture has been engraved by Meyer and Colnaghi.

The splendid portrait of Lady Douglas, now in possession of her descendant, Mr. T. Douglas Murray, is said to have been painted during this year. In it one sees how greatly Hoppner had advanced in certain respects upon his earlier ideals. Though he was never the mere painter of pretty women that superficial critics have pronounced him to be, yet one has only to study his work to see how steadily he outgrew the tendency to put physical beauty first and everything else second. As the years went on his aim became more and more to render character, and his portraits gained in force accordingly. Lady Douglas was a beautiful woman, and in earlier days he would have emphasised this. But she had also, it is clear, a pronounced individuality, and this is what Hoppner now made it his business to render. It is only as an afterthought that one thinks of her as a pretty woman. And the same criticism applies to the fine portrait of Miss Pollok, which was exhibited lately at Messrs. Agnew's. Here is a girl with no pretensions to good looks, only thoroughly honest and humorous, with plenty of individuality and charm, and all this Hoppner seizes perfectly. Compare these with the more



insipid "Countess of Mexborough" of his youth, and the extent of his advance is at once apparent.

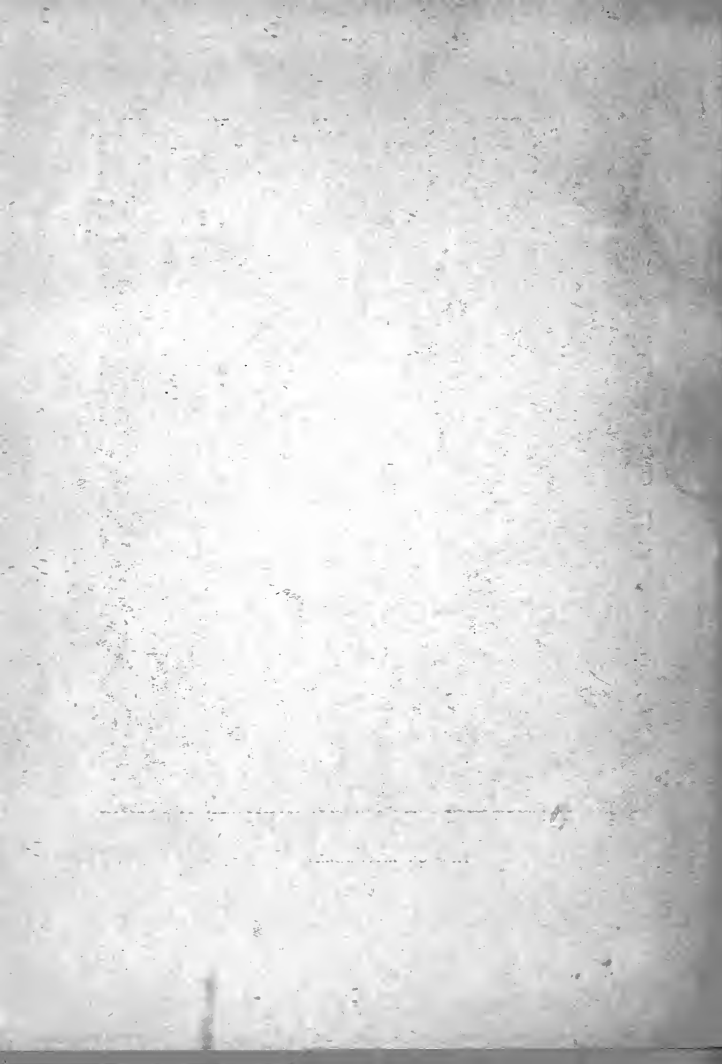
If Hoppner ever painted Henry Kirke White, it must have been at this time. The volume of poems which brought him into notice was published in 1803, and he died in 1806. The portrait by Hoppner, which is believed to be of Henry Kirke White, is in possession of the Corporation of Nottingham, his native town, and was bought at Christie's by the donor, Mr. Watson Fothergill, in 1884. There is no evidence to prove the identity of the picture, and stress has been laid upon the unlikelihood of the young and almost unknown poet sitting to the fashionable portrait painter. But Hoppner was himself a literary man, and frequented literary circles, and must have been well acquainted through Gifford with Southey, who was Kirke White's patron, so that this objection is anything but conclusive; it is certain, too, that he painted Robert Bloomfield, also a struggling poet of humble birth, who had similarly attracted notice by his genius. The portrait, whether that of Kirke White or not, is a striking one, and quite worthy of Hoppner. In default of better evidence to the contrary, the tradition of its identity may well be accepted.

A very fine full-length of the Most Rev. Arthur Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne, is said to have been painted in this year. It is a noble work, and is in the possession of Lord Dillon. The subject stands at full length, in his episcopal robes, furnishing just such a dignified state picture

as drew forth Hoppner's best powers. Many stories are current of this prelate, who was a refugee from the Revolution in France, as his father had been from the Hanoverian rule in England—or rather, Ireland. The family of the Dillons was closely allied by marriage with the Mulgraves and the Jerninghams, both of which had supplied Hoppner with sitters.



MISS CHOLMONDELEY



## CHAPTER X

### A RALLY

1805-1806

1805, Hoppner "revived to his full exertions"—"The Nabob"—Its identity—Mrs. Jerningham as "Hebe"—Lady Caroline Lamb—Lady Palmerston—Dr. Waagen and Hoppner's pictures—The Duchess of Rutland—1806, Sir Arthur Wellesley—John Hookham Frere—"The Sleeping Nymph" and contemporary criticism—William Pitt.

IN the year 1805 Hoppner sent six pictures to the Royal Academy Exhibition: portraits of Lady Mulgrave, the Hon. Miss Mercer, Master Smith, Mrs. Jerningham as "Hebe," the Duke of Grafton, and Mrs. Manning and Child. Lady Mulgrave's is a fair picture, but cannot be ranked among the painter's masterpieces. It was engraved by George Clint, and the original belongs to her descendant, the Marquess of Normanby. That of the Hon. Miss Mercer we can neither trace nor identify. The picture of Master Smith, under its more familiar title of "The Nabob," is known to all lovers of mezzotint in William Ward's fine copy. It shows a delightful little fellow sitting cross-legged in quasi-oriental costume, on something suggesting a divan, beneath overhanging curtains, with his hands on his knees and looking straight to the front. Chaloner Smith conjectures

that the subject was a son of Charles Smith, who was painter to the Great Mogul from 1793 to 1796 ; but it seems more probable that it was Frederick, son of Charles Culling Smith, a scion of a distinguished Anglo-Indian family, whose father, Charles Smith, had been Governor of Madras, and whose uncle, Culling (afterwards Sir Culling) Smith, was one of the survivors of the tragedy of the Black Hole, and was known in town as "The Nabob." Charles Culling Smith had become the second husband of the Lady Anne Fitzroy, whom Hoppner had painted a few years previously with her daughters to such good purpose ; the marriage took place in 1799, and she bore him two children—this boy, Frederick, and a daughter, Emily, who, as we have seen, succeeded her half-sister as Duchess of Beaufort. The picture may still be in possession of Charles Culling Smith's descendants. It should be added that it has a pathetic interest as being the last study of childhood which Hoppner exhibited, and it was assuredly not an unworthy one.

The portrait of Mrs. Jerningham as "Hebe" is familiar to the world in Henry Meyer's stipple engraving. If it is a truthful copy—a reservation which it is always necessary to make when considering engravings by this artist—the picture shows Hoppner both at his best and at his worst. The face is beautiful and characteristic, the head well posed, the drapery flowing and graceful, the attitude full of life and movement. But having secured these essential features, he appears to have been satisfied, and the limbs are out of

proportion to an extent which even Hoppner rarely ventured upon. The composition was a return to the style of Sir Joshua and the earlier masters, who made something of a point of disregarding anatomy, and the best explanation of its defects may be found in this circumstance; but the blemish is a serious one, nevertheless. The whereabouts of the original is uncertain. The subject was Frances Henrietta (*née* Sulyarde), wife of George Jerningham, afterwards a baronet, and ultimately Lord Stafford, whose marriage took place in 1799. In June of 1800, George Jerningham writes: "Fanny is setting (*sic*) for her picture to Hoppner for my Father, a half-length, 30 gs."; but whether that half-length is still in existence, or whether the whole-length under notice represents its ultimate development, we cannot say. In the latter case, the delay in completing the picture may be attributed to Hoppner's persistent ill-health.

The portrait of the Duke of Grafton is a solid and careful piece of work, and may be studied in Charles Turner's excellent mezzotint by those who cannot obtain access to the original. The subject is Augustus Henry, third duke, who in his time filled many high offices of state, and provoked some of Junius's unkindest cuts. If, however, he were really as "indolent, vacillating, obstinate, and immoral" as he has been described, Hoppner's picture does not show it, though there is plenty of shrewdness in the face; and this portrait must be placed among the category of those in which, "in his constant wish to represent

the gentleman, he sometimes failed to delineate the man," as his friend Gifford put it. The Duke had retired from political life some years before this portrait was painted, and it may be that his better nature had utilised the interval to assert itself. The picture of Mrs. Manning and Child has vanished.

It may be conjectured with reasonable probability that the portraits of Lady Caroline Lamb and Lady Cowper (afterwards Lady Palmerston) were painted during this year. Both were brides; the former was the daughter of that Countess of Bessborough whom we have already seen as Lady Duncannon in "The Show"; she married the Hon. William Lamb, afterwards second Lord Melbourne, in June, 1805; while Lady Amelia Lamb, her sister-in-law, was married in the following month to Lord Cowper. Lady Caroline's portrait hangs at Althorp, the home of her grandparents. The story of her relations with Lord Byron, of her separation from her husband, and her subsequent distinction as a novelist, need not be retold here. Lady Cowper's portrait may be seen at Panshanger, where it was one of the few modern pictures to excite the admiration of that very pronounced *laudator temporis acti*, Dr. Paul Waagen. Lord Cowper died in 1837, and two years later the widow married Sir Henry John Temple, afterwards famous as Lord Palmerston. She lived until 1869.

A conjectural date is that which attributes to this year the fine full-length of Elizabeth, Duchess of Rutland. But it must be fairly approximate,



and may be allowed to pass. The Duchess, whom we recall as the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of Frederick, Earl of Carlisle, in Charles Wilkin's beautiful engraving, after Hoppner's picture painted in 1798, when she was still a girl, now appears in more matured beauty, but still with a look of her old self, standing with a straw hat in her hand in the garden which she laid out at Belvoir. The earlier portrait was one of Hoppner's finest works, and this picture, fine as it is, cannot be placed in the same category with it. The change for the worse in the fashions for ladies' dress may have something to do with this difference; also Hoppner may have wished to express something of the effect of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world upon the artless girl whom he had rendered so perfectly six years earlier. But it is a noble work, nevertheless, with a grace of pose and dignity which recalls Sir Joshua, and few besides Hoppner could have painted it. The lady looks "all native to her sphere," and that is much.

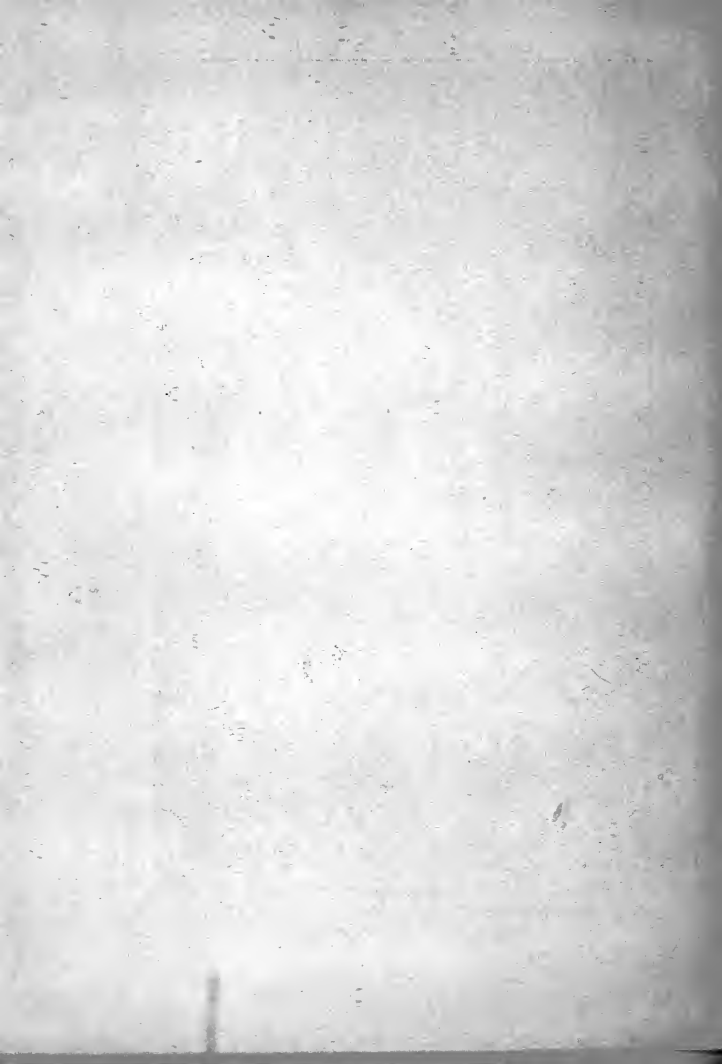
The portrait of Lady Florence Balfour, which was shown at the Old Masters Exhibition in Dublin last year, is dated 1805. Apart from the hideousness of the costume, it is one of Hoppner's least pleasing works. The artist and his sitter were somehow not upon good terms—perhaps it was one of Hoppner's bad days. Anyhow, the result is not a success, though it has many points of merit. Lodge Evans, Lord Frankfort, whose portrait after Hoppner was engraved by W. W. Barney in 1806, must have sat during this year,

and so must Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a gallant figure in uniform, who looked as though he had many years to live, but died, it must be presumed, suddenly in 1806. Charles Turner's engraving from this picture is well known. It is probable, too, that the portrait of Dr. Charles Manners Sutton, now in the Royal Collection, was painted this year upon the accession of that prelate to the Primacy in the teeth of Pitt's opposition. The picture was engraved by Charles Turner.

In 1806 Hoppner's output would seem to have been again small; he sent six pictures only to the Royal Academy Exhibition, and beyond those six we have been able to trace no others to this year, a most unusual circumstance. The pictures in question are the portraits of Lord Camden, William Pitt, General Sir Arthur Wellesley, Sir William Scott, and the Right Hon. John Hookham Frere, and the two fancy subjects, "A Primrose Girl" and "A Sleeping Nymph." Earl Camden's is a dignified portrait of the kind that Hoppner could do so well, and shows to advantage in William Ward's mezzotint. That of John Hookham Frere, which has been engraved by W. W. Barney, is also a successful work. The original was shown in the Guelph Exhibition by his descendant, Mr. John Tudor Frere, in 1891, and at the Old Masters in 1894. The portrait of Sir Arthur Wellesley is probably the full-length engraved by W. W. Barney. It is a praiseworthy, but somewhat conventional portrait; and must have been painted immediately after the hero's return from India in September, 1805, with the



THE COUNTESS OF CHOLMONDELEY AND HER SON



blushing honours of his Deccan campaign thick upon him. The half-length at Apsley House must have been painted about the same time, for in 1807 Sir Arthur was appointed Irish Secretary, and between Ireland and foreign service he was not much in England again for some years. The latter portrait was shown at the Guelph Exhibition in 1891; the whereabouts of the former is unknown.

Of the "Primrose Girl" nothing is known. But the "Sleeping Nymph" was regarded by Hoppner's contemporaries as the high-water mark of his achievement, and contemporary allusions to it are not wanting. The engraving by William Ward shows a composition of striking beauty, and the esteem in which it was held in the early nineteenth century is shown by the circumstance that a certain enterprising individual, Doney by name, thought it worth while to publish it in a "Bowdlerised" form, draping the recumbent figure more extensively and removing the little flying Cupid, with his quiver and arrows, as savouring of scandal to a serious generation. The fullest detailed description of the picture is to be found in Carey's *Descriptive Catalogue* of the paintings in Sir John Fleming Leicester's Collection (1819), in which he speaks as if he had a first-hand acquaintance with the artist's intention. After describing the recumbent pose of the figure and "the rosy archer hovering above," he alludes to the crimson curtain stretched above—an old device of Hoppner's, as we have before pointed out—and interprets the design as "an

Arcadian prospect, wherein, according to the fables of the poets, Innocence slept in security at noon, and Spring, Summer, and Autumn decked the scene." Spring flowers bloom about the sleeper, and beyond the bank on which she lies "dark blue waters, gleaming with touches of light, are seen flowing through fields of shadowy verdure, and groves darkly tinged with autumnal gold." "Love alone, the most powerful, the most dangerous of all intruders, has entered this tranquil retreat, as if to show that it is in solitude and silence, when the heart has most leisure to concentrate all its feelings on a single object, that the tenderest of all passions takes the most entire possession of the soul." He speaks of "its noble breadth of light and shadow," and of the subtlety of contrasts and effects in the colouring. The head he pronounces "one of the most clear and mellow pieces of colouring that ever was produced by this artist's pencil"; and the writer of Hoppner's obituary notice in *The Gentleman's Magazine* spoke of the "vivacity, truth, and delicacy of the various fleshy tints," which, he says, "have scarcely been surpassed by any master." Hoppner himself, he tells us, looked upon it as his best work. John Young also ranked it very high. "This picture has been considered," he writes, "as the best production of the Master." Young remarks, too, in general terms upon the influence of Reynolds perceptible in it. It is singular that none of these critics drew attention to its similarity in pose and general arrangement to Sir Joshua's "Cymon and Iphigenia," which cannot be wholly accidental.

The likeness is said to be that of Miss Cottin, who was married to Sir John Fleming Leicester, the owner of the picture, in 1810. The picture remained one of the glories of the Tabley Collection until 1827, when its owner, by this time Lord de Tabley, died. Many of his pictures were dispersed, including the "Sleeping Nymph," which went for £472, a very respectable price in those days, to Lord Egremont, and it now hangs in his old home at Petworth, under the changed title of "Venus and Cupid." Though badly hung, it can still be recognised as a masterpiece. It is possible that Lady de Tabley, who afterwards married a clerical relative, was a party to this sale, disliking, it may be, the idea of going down to posterity in such a very *négligé* toilet; and preferring the insipid presentment of herself as "Hope" by Lawrence, which she did not offer for sale. Hoppner again painted Miss Cottin's portrait towards the close of his life, and Henry Meyer engraved it abominably and published it after his death and her marriage.

There was another picture by Hoppner in the Tabley Collection, that of a lady dancing, in Turkish attire, described by Young as not up to Hoppner's highest level, but this was not included in the sale, and may still be at Tabley.

Of the portrait of the eminent lawyer, Sir William Scott, afterwards Lord Stowell, not much need be said. It is a good official portrait, and quite worthy of its place on the walls of University College, Oxford, where it hangs. Its principal interest to the student lies in the fact of its having

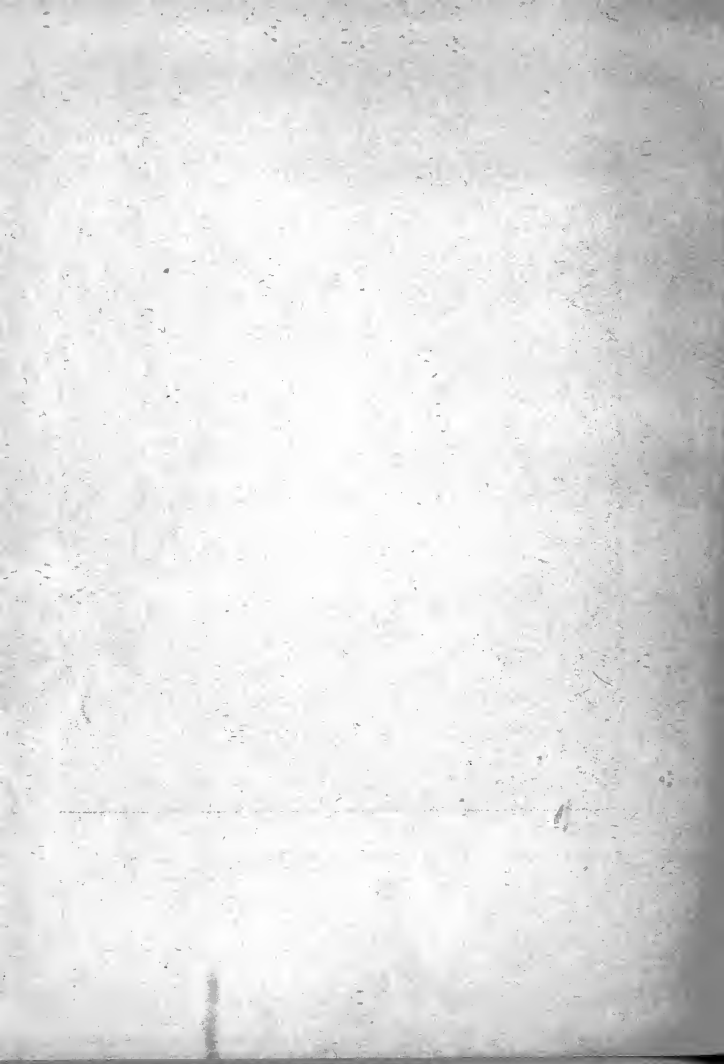
led the writer of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* notice of Hoppner into the otherwise unfounded assertion that Hoppner painted Sir Walter Scott; to the serious waste of time and temper on the part of one who desired to ascertain the truth about Hoppner and his works. The picture has been engraved by Clint. It is worth noticing here that a portrait of Lord Eldon, the brother of Lord Stowell, figures among the undated pictures by Hoppner which have appeared in the salerooms during late years.

The portrait of William Pitt is one which is especially associated with Hoppner. It was the last for which Pitt sat, and is commonly esteemed the best likeness of him extant. Nollekens made free use of it for the bust which he executed after Pitt's death. It was actually finished on the 28th October of the previous year, and was still in the painter's studio when Pitt died on January 23rd. Applications for replicas poured from his friends, and Lord Mulgrave, for whom the picture was painted, acceded to them liberally. Ten, at least, of these are known, and one of them is now in the National Portrait Gallery; while two other versions, varying slightly from this picture, are in possession of the Grocers' Company and Lord Carrington respectively. Of the picture belonging to the Grocers' Company, Sir George Scharf writes: "Viewed altogether, this is the richest and most important picture existing of the great statesman in his maturity." An original study for the head only was bought by Sir Walter Stirling in 1823. As regards the merits of the





LADY CATHERINE LAMB



portrait there seems to be little question, and it is in any case an impressive picture. Lord Rosebery appears to prefer the portrait painted by Lawrence; but he admits that contemporaries noticed in it the absence of the "port-wine complexion," which is faithfully reproduced in Hoppner's picture. Wilberforce certainly approved Hoppner's portrait, while remarking upon the falling-off it showed on the youthful Pitt; and even Fox apparently had a good word to say for it. The Prince Regent signified his approval in equally characteristic fashion. As Haydon relates the story, on the authority of Lascelles Hoppner, the Prince stepped one day into the gallery where Hoppner had hung this portrait. "Ah, ah," said the Prince, "there he is with his d——d obstinate face." And, indeed, Hoppner's likeness of Pitt is far from unsatisfying. It is not flattering, in the ordinary sense of the word, but a glance from the original to the caricatures by Gillray on the opposite side of the room where it hangs in the National Portrait Gallery shows how very slight a distortion was required to render Pitt's features ridiculous, and how very skilfully Hoppner evaded the danger without sacrificing the truth. For Hoppner was one of those who, when he put forth his powers in earnest, "divinely through all hindrance sees the man," and Englishmen can never cease to be grateful to the genius which has fixed for them, once and for all, the features of one of their greatest statesmen.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE END

1807-1810

1807, Hoppner "even more than ordinarily successful"—Lady Louisa Manners and the "record" sale—The replica at Ham House—Lady Mary Grenville—George Canning—1808, sent nothing to the Royal Academy—Increasing ill health—1809, last contributions to the Royal Academy—Mrs. Inchbald—The beginnings of *The Quarterly*—Hoppner's active interest and writing for it—Severe illness at Ryde—Last illness and death—Miscellaneous and undated portraits—R. B. Sheridan—Edmund Burke—C. J. Fox—Inaccessibility of Hoppner's pictures—Very few in public galleries and a great number gone abroad—Revival of interest in Hoppner's works.

IN the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1807 Hoppner exhibited portraits of Lord King, Mr. T. Grenville, the Prince of Wales, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Farnborough, and Sir Samuel Hood. To this list must be added "A Lady of Quality" and "A Lady," in which the artist reverted to the annoying practice of earlier years of omitting to name his portraits. It is highly probable, however, that the "Lady of Quality" was the famous picture of Lady Louisa Manners, the original or a replica of which changed hands a few years ago for the astounding price of 14,050 guineas, the largest price ever realised for a picture at a public

auction. The subject stands at three-quarter length in a landscape, dressed (somewhat incongruously, for her age was then forty-two, and she was stout withal) as a young peasant-girl; and the picture was described as being remarkable for the beauty of the facial expression, the colouring, and the charming landscape background. Sir Joshua had painted the same lady some years previously, when she was younger and still slim, and Hoppner made a copy of this picture, which still hangs at Ham House, with the faded reds omitted with cruelly scrupulous fidelity. But for once Hoppner held his own easily against the master, and his portrait of this lady is more indubitably a work of genius. A duplicate of Hoppner's portrait exists at Ham House, in possession of Lord Dysart, and it is probable that this is the original, while that which figured in the salerooms is a replica, painted for her daughter, Lady Laura Tollemache, to whom it once belonged. Of course, it is an extraordinarily pleasing and beautiful picture, a masterpiece of rich and harmonious colour and full of nameless charm, but its value can hardly be put at the sum which it fetched. The subject of it became in 1821 Countess of Dysart in her own right, and the title is still held by her descendants. It has been finely engraved by Charles Turner, and more recently a modern engraver has tried his hand upon it, but without much success.

The "Portrait of a Lady" has been identified with Miss St. Clare, or St. Clair, but it does not appear who she was. Of the Right Hon. Thomas

Grenville, the portrait which appeared this year is probably identical with that engraved by Charles Turner and published in 1808; but Hoppner at some time painted another portrait of this statesman in a slightly different attitude, which was engraved for Fisher in 1830. The subject of it was the second of a famous trio: George, the father, who was Prime Minister from 1763 to 1765; Thomas, his second son, who, without being specially distinguished, filled various offices of state with credit, and bequeathed his splendid library to the British Museum; and William Wyndham Grenville, the third son, the distinguished colleague of Pitt, whom, too, Hoppner painted. The last-named it was who formed the famous "Ministry of All the Talents" in 1806. The portrait of the Prince of Wales is that now in possession of H.R.H. Princess Louise, and exhibited by her in the Guelph Exhibition in 1891. The Right Hon. Charles Long, a virtuoso and a lover of books, became Lord Farnborough; and his title was revived again to be extinguished by the late Sir Thomas Erskine May, who assumed it upon retirement from the public service of the House of Commons. Lord Hawkesbury's political services, both before and after his accession to the earldom of Liverpool, were of a useful and solid type, and were recognised as such by his generation. He negotiated the Peace of Amiens among other matters. The title is now extinct, but the baronetcy continues, and the picture is, no doubt, in possession of the present baronet, Sir George Banks Jenkinson. It was



THE DUCHESS OF RUTLAND





engraved by Henry Meyer, and published in 1808, and again in 1815.

The original picture of Sir Samuel Hood is still in possession of Viscount Hood, who exhibited it in the Guelph Exhibition in 1891. The subject was a distinguished naval officer, who covered himself with glory on many occasions during those stormy years: he lost his arm in the engagement off Rochefort, in 1806, the year preceding the painting of this picture. He was the type of man whom Hoppner delighted in painting, and the portrait is, accordingly, a striking one.

Six other pictures may be assigned to this year, those of Lady Mary Grenville, Lady Pollington, Sir Archibald Edmonstone, and George Canning, Sir Soulden Lawrence, and Lord Cathcart. The portrait of Lady Mary Grenville, afterwards Lady Mary Arundell of Wardour, shows what one critic terms "a substantial, unpoetical person, little calculated to rouse an artist's enthusiasm." But Hoppner has contrived out of the unpromising material a fine picture. The face, if plain, is far from uninteresting, and the colour is cleverly managed, the old gold of the dress stands up well and harmoniously against the rich landscape background. The fashion of the lady's dress is so exactly that of Lady Florence Balfour, which was certainly painted four years earlier, that this picture might well be antedated, were it not that the sitter would be almost too young. The picture first changed hands at the Stowe sale for £26 16s. 6d., and when it next came under the hammer, in 1902, it realised 7,800 guineas. It was on show

at Messrs. Agnew's for a few weeks in 1902. Lady Pollington was a daughter of the third Earl Hardwicke, and married John, Viscount Pollington, son of that Countess of Mexborough whom Hoppner had painted in the outset of his career. The marriage took place in the August of this year, and the picture was probably painted for the occasion. It was sold in 1901 for £204 15s. Judged by the engraving made by Charles Turner, the portrait of Sir Archibald Edmonstone should be a fine work, but the original picture has three times in recent years changed hands for what seem like absurdly small sums, twice for ten guineas and lastly, in 1898, for £9 16s. The date of the painting is expressly noted as being 1807, the subject of it being then eighty-nine. He died in the course of this year.

The portrait of George Canning is the fine whole-length engraved by John Young, and published in April, 1808, a very characteristic and clever portrait, with a half-mocking smile upon the face which is haunting and unforgettable. This is distinctly a more powerful portrait of the great statesman than that of 1798, to which reference has already been made, where the personality of the sitter has not been nearly so well caught.

The portrait of Lord Cathcart (father-in-law of Lord Lynedoch), the distinguished general and diplomat, whose sudden descent upon Copenhagen in the autumn of that year under Canning's direction foiled the plans of Napoleon for the time, must have been painted before his departure on

that expedition, as an engraving from it by Henry Meyer is dated in November of the same year, the day before he landed on his return to England. A second engraving from it by Charles Bestland was published in the following March. The original was last exhibited at the National Portrait Exhibition, 1868, by the present Earl Cathcart. Of Sir Soulden Lawrence, reckoned an eminent Judge of the King's Bench in his day, all that need concern us is the fact that his portrait was painted by Hoppner about this time and engraved by Charles Turner in March, 1808.

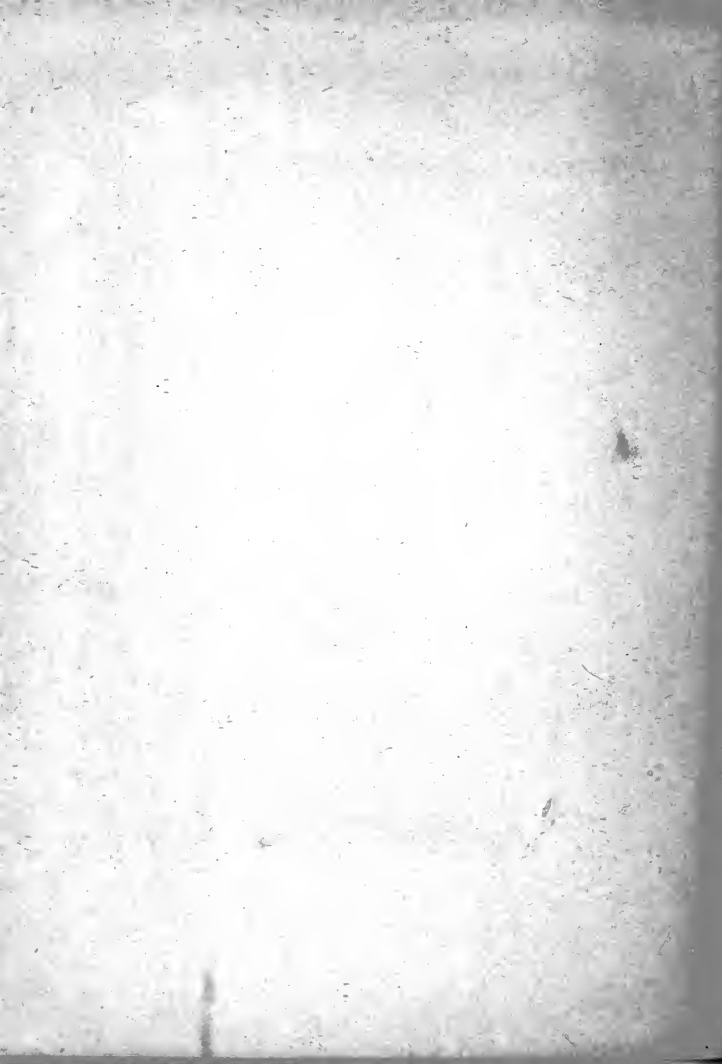
Hoppner's ill-health was now evidently gaining upon him, for in 1808 he sent nothing to the Royal Academy Exhibition, and only three of his pictures can be assigned to this year, and these not with absolute certainty, viz. the portraits of Sir Charles Henry Coote, the Duke of Richmond, and Lady St. John of Bletsoe. They are not striking works in any case. The Duke of Richmond's portrait sold in 1896 for £126; that of Sir Charles Coote, a pleasant-looking lad of sixteen or so, is still in possession of his descendants, and was exhibited by the present baronet at the Dublin Exhibition in 1902; that of Lady St. John may still be in possession of Lord St. John—it is best known in W. W. Barney's mezzotint, published in March, 1809. She was a daughter of the Lady Rouse Boughton whose portrait Hoppner had painted in 1786.

In the exhibition of 1809, the last to which Hoppner was to contribute, six of his works

appeared, viz. the Earl and Countess of Essex, still owned by their descendants ; Sir George Beaumont ; a "Portrait of a Lady," which may have been Mrs. Inchbald ; Earl Spencer ; and the Earl of St. Vincent, better known as Admiral Jervis. Sir George Beaumont was a well-known amateur painter and patron of artists and the fine arts generally, and Hoppner found in him a firm and appreciative friend. Say's engraving from this portrait shows a delicate oval face of the true artistic type, full of character. A portrait of Mrs. Inchbald, famous in her day as a novelist and dramatist, by Hoppner, was exhibited by Major Corbett at the Old Masters Exhibition in 1879, and was subsequently sold at Christie's in 1898 for 1,000 guineas. As Hoppner had been assiduously corresponding with this lady during the latter months of 1808 and the beginning of 1809 with a view to enlisting her as a contributor to *The Quarterly Review*, it may well be that he also painted her portrait about that time, though the size which he chose for it (24 inches by 19½ inches) was an unusual one for him at this period. She is shown in a yellow dress with a scarf, and in the Academy Catalogue the picture is said to be unfinished, but no mention was made of this circumstance at the sale. The portrait of Admiral John Jervis, Earl of St. Vincent, now in the Royal Collection, is, to our mind, one of Hoppner's best works. Unlike other artists who painted the same subject, Hoppner brings out the kindness which underlies the rugged severity of the great Admiral, who was dreaded as few officers



A SLEEPING NYMPH



have been, and put down two formidable mutinies in a fashion which was never forgotten. It is a pity that there is no better engraving of this picture than the small-scale one by Henry Robinson, published in 1830. It would be well worth reproducing in mezzotint, were it possible to find a competent engraver to do it. A study of the same subject, 20 inches by 19 inches, with the head unfinished, was shown in the National Portrait Exhibition in 1867 by the Hon. J. Carnegie; this was probably a sketch for the larger picture. The portrait of George John, second Earl Spencer, is also a fine work. It was presented by the subject of it to his friend, the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, from whom it passed by inheritance to the husband of Augusta, Lady Delamere, and was by her presented to the present Earl Spencer, in whose London house it now hangs. The Earl is shown seated in a chair reading—a strong and characteristic portrait. Henry Meyer made a fair engraving from it, which was published in March of 1809, showing that the portrait had been painted some little time previously.

Other portraits assignable to this year are those of the Hon. Henry Legge, the Very Rev. the Hon. Edward Legge, Dean of Windsor, Edward Forster, Esq., and Lord Braybrooke, all engraved by Charles Turner; Lady de Tabley, engraved by Henry Meyer; and Dr. John Eveleigh, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford, engraved by W. Say. The two first-named are in the possession of Lord Dartmouth, the living representative of the

family ; that of Lord Braybrooke, a strong portrait, is owned by his descendants ; and that of Lady de Tabley is at Tabley House. This last cannot be ranked among Hoppner's best work, if one is to judge from Henry Meyer's engraving, though the hideous raiment of the period is in no small measure to blame for the failure. The lady is shown at full length, walking out with a dog, in a landscape which is the most pleasing part of the picture. Dr. Eveleigh's portrait hangs at his old college, and that of Edward Forster in the offices of the Royal Exchange Assurance Company, of which he seems to have been reckoned a staff and mainstay in his day. This last is a virile portrait, and the same may be said of that of Dr. Eveleigh.

Hoppner's malady, some affection of the liver, was meanwhile making rapid strides. In June, 1809, he had a severe seizure at Ryde after a fatiguing journey thither on horseback, and lay insensible to the drastic remedies prescribed by the medical practice of the day for forty-eight hours, but he recovered to all appearance, and was able to write to Rogers in a day or two that he could ride on horseback and felt better than he had done for years. But the rally was only momentary. When it was evident that the end was not far off, Lawrence was assiduous in his inquiries after him, but was ungraciously received. "The death of Hoppner," he wrote in an oft-quoted letter, "leaves me, it is true, without a rival, and this has been acknowledged to me by the ablest of my competitors," and we know that



upon Hoppner's death he raised his prices considerably.

Hoppner died on the 23rd of January, 1810, and was buried in the cemetery of St. James's Chapel, Tottenham Court Road.

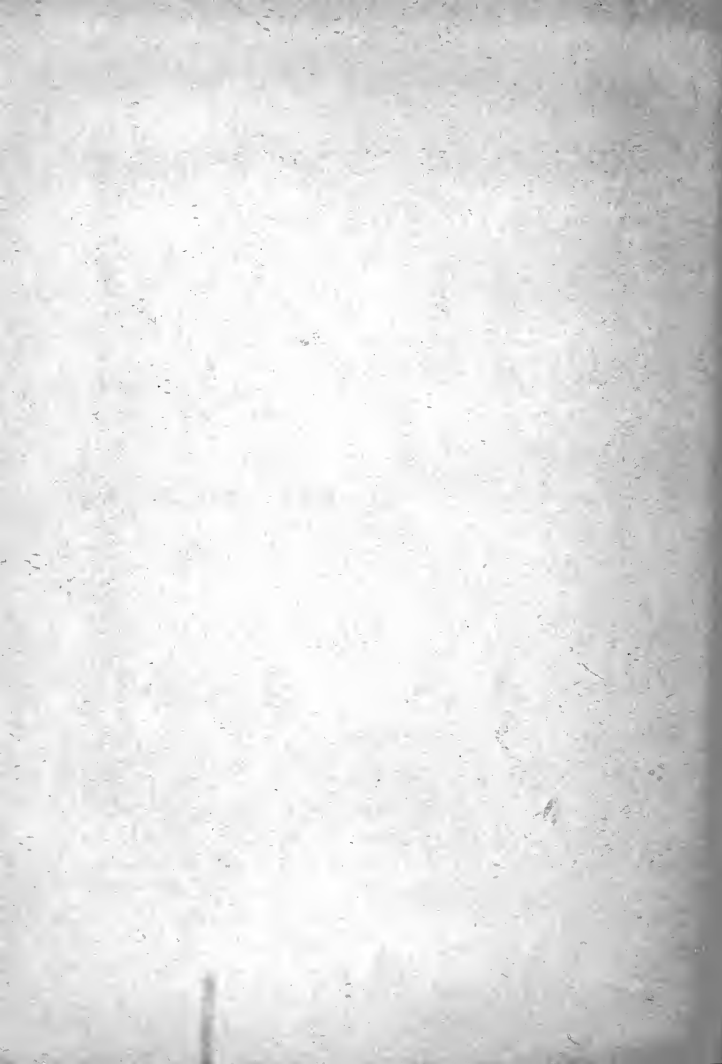
The pictures already noticed are very far from exhausting the tale of Hoppner's labours, for a number of works by or attributed to him cannot be dated. There are several portraits of members of the Wellesley family—the Marquess Wellesley and his greater brother, the great Duke, besides Lord Cowley and Lord Maryborough—all belonging to the present Duke of Wellington; Warren Hastings; Samuel Rogers, the poet and wit, still to be seen in his old haunt at Holland House; Walter Fawkes, of Farnley, Turner's friend and the patron of artists; Lady Palmerston, which hangs in her old home at Panshanger; Lady Spencer, known only through W. Say's engraving; Nancy Carey, a splendid full-length portrait of Edmund Kean's disreputable mother, standing in white as a gleaner in a fine landscape with reapers at work, which sold not long since for £1,732 10s.; full-lengths of Lord Nelson (which sold at Bryant's sale in 1865 for £100, and fetched £2,677 thirty years later); Princess Sophia Matilda of Gloucester; Mrs. O'Hara; John, Marquess of Athole; Lady Hester Stanhope, Pitt's extraordinary niece; Robert Southey (for some time supposed to be Lord Castlereagh); Sir Sidney Smith, of Acre fame; Archdeacon Nares (whose father Hoppner had painted before him); and many others, including

a host of anonymous ladies, gentlemen, and children, and fancy subjects. Two portraits of Sheridan, attributed to Hoppner, have appeared in the salerooms of late years, and there is one in Mr. Harland-Peck's collection which, to judge from a print of it in *The Connoisseur*, must be a good work. The *Connoisseur* writer dates this picture about 1775, when "the first comedy was just written," but at this time Hoppner was a student in the Academy Schools and unknown to the world of art. About 1797, when Hoppner painted his celebrated picture of the second Mrs. Sheridan and her son, is a much more likely date.

A portrait purporting to be of "Young Shelley by Hoppner" changed hands lately at the Marquand sale in New York. It is not impossible that Hoppner painted Shelley in his youth, for the rank and position of Shelley's family would have included them in the circle from which Hoppner drew his sitters; but it may be asserted with some confidence that he never painted Harriet Westbrook, whom Shelley married as a girl of sixteen in the August of the year following his death, although a picture said to be of her by Hoppner has twice appeared in the salerooms of late years. A half-length of Edmund Burke, sold recently as by Hoppner, is very likely authentic, in spite of its having fetched a poor price, for Burke was a prominent member of the Whig circle with which the painter was closely associated. There is no reason, however, for doubting the genuineness of the small half-length of Charles James Fox, probably an early work, which was



LADY LOUISA MANNERS, AFTERWARDS COUNTESS OF DYSART



lately sold among the Townshend heirlooms. A portrait of Mrs. Abington, Sir Joshua's famous sitter, attributed to Hoppner, was sold at Christie's in 1897 for the paltry price of twenty-one guineas, and a clever portrait of Mrs. Huskisson fetched 1,900 guineas a few months since, though scarcely up to the level of Hoppner's best work. A notable picture by Hoppner on (for him) unusual lines, which realised a comparatively small price not long ago, was that entitled "A Daughter of the Duke of Westmorland as an Angel among Clouds"—a far-off reminiscence of Sir Joshua's "Heads of Angels"—a fine sketch of a curly-headed little girl fluttering among clouds, perhaps unfinished. A sketch for this picture, as well as for the Duchess of Westmorland, was among those included in the sale of Hoppner's effects after his death.

Hoppner's pictures are, for the most part, secluded in out-of-the-way spots, in old English town and country houses, where they hang pleasantly and appropriately among the surroundings in which the subjects of them lived and moved, appearing to such advantage as none can realise who have only seen them on the crowded walls of a London gallery; or immured in the palaces of modern millionaires where they are valued at their price in the market, looking as much at home as some graceful wild creature in the cage of a travelling menagerie; while many, alas! have vanished permanently from our midst, captives of the almighty dollar in the great Philistia beyond the seas. Less than a dozen are to be seen

in the public collections of this country, seven only of these are in London ; and none of them show the artist at his highest, although the portraits of the Countess of Oxford at the National Gallery, and of William Pitt and "Gentleman" Smith in the National Portrait Gallery, are unmistakably the work of a master-hand. For the last few years his pictures have been in demand in the salerooms, where they have fetched high, but erratic prices, and *habitués* have had some opportunity of studying them. But it is to be feared that the public at large must for a long while to come remain unfamiliar with the works of one who is now taking his rightful place among the masters of British art, high above the shallow and showy contemporaries who for a while were preferred before him. Something of his power and charm and the inimitable insight which marked his treatment of children and, in a lesser degree, women, can be realised from the magnificent mezzotints in which the Wards, Charles Turner, Reynolds, and others of the heroic age of mezzotinters have recorded some of his masterpieces ; but the effect of his rich and harmonious colouring and such magic of expression as that of "Miranda" or "Lady Louisa Manners" are often beyond them, while modern engravers who have attempted these subjects have, without exception, failed pitiably. But the revival of public interest in the work of Hoppner is a good sign, and cannot fail to strengthen the flow of the current which is setting slowly but surely against the poverty-stricken ideals of

modern art, or what passes for such on the walls of the Royal Academy. In time, it may be, we shall see again a stalwart band of British painters with something definite to say and the ability to say it, and, what is nearly as important, a public that will comprehend, however dimly, their message.

## CHAPTER XII

### PERSONAL AND CRITICAL

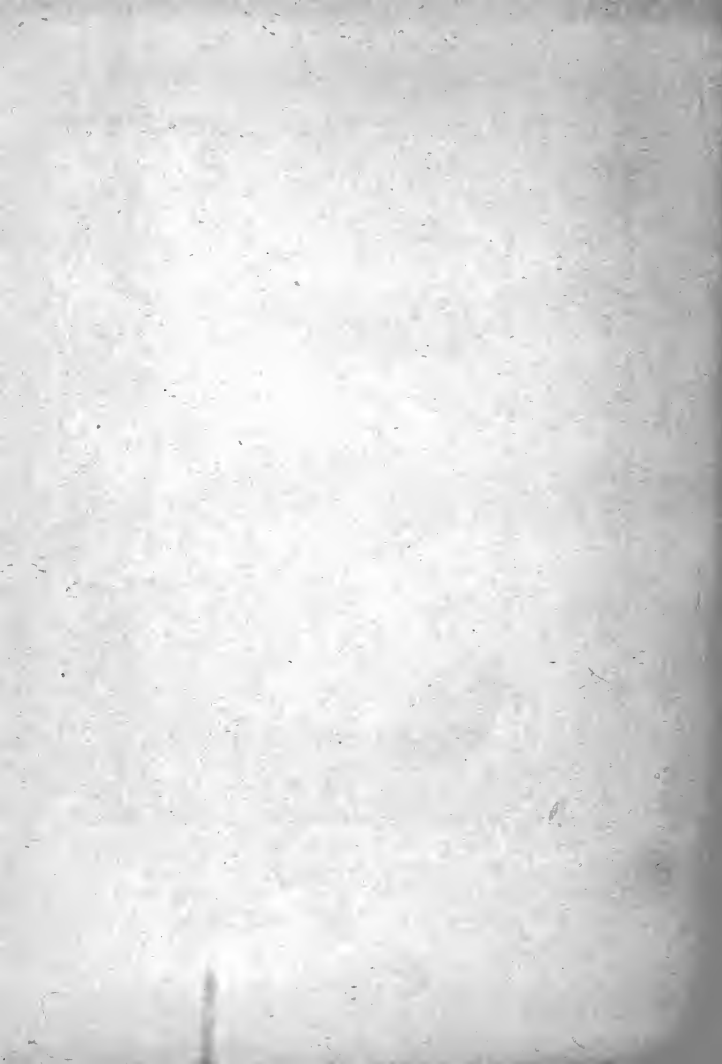
Hoppner's career uneventful—The inferiority of Lawrence's work to his—Hoppner's famous criticism of Lawrence supported by Reynolds—The rivalry of Hoppner and Lawrence not political—Hoppner's friends among all parties—Gifford's word-portrait of Hoppner—Hoppner as a literary man—Contributions to *The Quarterly*—*Oriental Tales*—His love for the country—Hoppner's place in English art with Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney—The death of Hoppner closed the great school of English portrait-painting.

HOPPNER'S life was uneventful, and his career generally prosperous. He leapt into notice early, in some measure through interest, but also, it would seem, upon his merits, and he maintained himself by growing skill and brilliancy against all comers except Lawrence. The bitterness of Lawrence's successful rivalry, which, in a measure, spoiled Hoppner's life, lay in Lawrence's unquestionable inferiority. No good judge could for a moment prefer Lawrence's work, with its deference to fashion, its poverty of invention and method, and its blindness to everything but the surface trivialities of the sitter, to the reality and insight which marked Hoppner's work upon its





THE MARQUESS OF THOMOND



higher plane ; yet the disagreeable fact remained that the public, as a whole, under the tasteless direction of the King, preferred the inferior work. Lawrence was the younger man, and Hoppner had been exhibiting for five years when he came to town as an *enfant prodigue*, and rapidly supplanted him at Court, eventually to be forced upon the unwilling Academy into the vacancy among the Associates which was Hoppner's by right. What Lawrence lacked in art he made up in easy management of the Court ; he was a sleek and clever worldling, a "ladies' man," an excellent portrayer of fashion, and, as Reynolds observed at the outset of his career, possessed the knack of infusing into his female portraits that spice of "naughtiness" which seems to have delighted a generation of prim proprieties, and provoked Hoppner's famous criticism in later years. He attracted women—his name was involved in a scandal with a royal princess, and his dealings with the two daughters of Mrs. Siddons, whom he wooed simultaneously, were the reverse of creditable. But he was careful to keep the door of his lips, and avoided making enemies. Hoppner was the reverse of all this : blameless in his social relations, happily married, generous, recklessly outspoken, and hot-tempered ; a true artist, always striving after the best, despising insipidity and fashion, and aiming to catch and express the soul of his sitter, even if he did not always succeed. Between him and Lawrence there could be no sympathy.

It is a mistake, however, to assume, with Allan

Cunningham and other biographers, that the rivalry between Hoppner and Lawrence was political. Hoppner's sympathies were, no doubt, with the Whigs; we hear of his voting for and dining with Horne Tooke, and his intimate association with the Prince of Wales would also throw him naturally into the Whig camp; but it is certain also that his friends were drawn from all circles, irrespective of politics. His closest friend was Gifford, and he took a leading part in the founding of *The Quarterly Review*, to the earlier numbers of which he was a contributor. "He and Gifford were the dearest friends in the world," said Rogers, "and yet they were always falling out and abusing each other." He was welcomed in Evangelical and Anti-Slavery circles, then and for some time later reckoned on the Tory side; while among the Whigs he was on terms of intimacy with Mackintosh, Rogers, Granville Sharp, and Sydney Smith, being a member of the exclusive coteries of the Council of Trent and the King of Clubs, which included some of the most brilliant talent of the day, and numbered among their members Porson, Romilly, Scarlett, Lord Holland, Brougham, Jeffrey, and Hallam. And the list of his sitters is by no means confined to the Whigs. It is clear that he was a good and amusing talker, a fine musician, and an accomplished and well-read man, whose company was welcomed in any circle of educated men. He was generally popular, too, among his brother artists, and took part in their social relaxations freely. He was a close friend of Martin

Archer Shee, afterwards President of the Academy, as an extant letter, in which he asks Shee's acceptance of a volume of his poems, and Shee's reply show.

Like many another critic, Hoppner failed somewhat in estimating the worth of his contemporaries, but it was on the side of generosity. Reynolds he revered as a master, and he knew the worth of Hogarth and Gainsborough; but he placed a value upon Stothard, West, Barry, and other minor stars which strikes one curiously in these days. Romney alone he underestimates, though it would seem in this case that he allowed his distaste for him as a man—and especially as a husband—to affect his artistic judgment. It must be admitted, however, that Hayley's *Life of Romney*, which Hoppner was then reviewing for *The Quarterly*, is a provoking book. But his general attitude towards contemporary art is summed up in the saying reported by Cunningham: "Aye, it is a noble picture; but it has one damning defect,—it is a *modern* one. Prove it, sir, to be but two hundred years old, and from the brush of a famous man, and here's two thousand guineas for it."

As a literary man he did enough to show that he might have done more, had the opportunity been granted him. His contributions to the early numbers of *The Quarterly* are spirited and concise, and not lacking in point. He appreciates, for instance, as Matthew Arnold did after him, the retarding influence of a school upon art.

“The man mature with labour chops  
For the bright stream a channel grand,  
And sees not that the sacred drops  
Ran off and vanish'd out of hand.”

Thus he writes :—

“Whenever schools have been instituted, whether by nations or individuals, the arts have been observed gradually to decline ; and, perhaps for this reason, that in such seminaries everything is contagious, except legitimate excellence. Our annual exhibitions furnish abundant evidence of the truth of this assertion ; for the students, losing sight of the great authorities in art, are content to follow the popular painter of the day. This, as defects are easily imitated, unfortunately flatters the indolent, and entraps the unwary ; and is naturally productive of a uniform mode of practice, that not only tends to paralyse genius, but obstructs the course of effective improvement.”

And he points out, with justice, that the great lights of the eighteenth-century won their eminence independently of the Academy. There is a generous touch in one of his final sentences : “No expectations can be formed of that student who is a critic before he becomes a lover.”

To his volume of *Oriental Tales* and his contributions to *The Artist* we can do little more than refer. The former is a collection of versified tales from Eastern sources ; they are not lacking in wit and polish and run easily and smoothly, the work of a man of taste and culture, though not necessarily of a poet. The prefatory address



LADY ANNE LAMBTON AND CHILDREN





to a critic who had fallen foul of the first edition may be quoted :—

“ A Horse before an Ass was led,  
For being noisy and ‘ill-bred’—  
‘So, sir! the forest has been ringing  
With what you’re pleased to call your singing.  
Worse notes a windpipe ne’er distended;  
My taste, my nerves have been offended:  
Do, prithee, leave that vulgar neighing—  
’Tis pity you’ve no ears for braying!’ ”

In No. 3 of *The Artist* he has occasion to defend the art of the portrait painter, so strangely decried in that age when it attained its highest development.

“ With respect to the portrait painter, it may truly be affirmed that his life is not one of idleness, but of unremitting industry and care. His art, when carried to any high degree of excellence, challenges our admiration and praise, for, as Donne saith,—

‘ A hand, an eye,  
By Hilliard drawn, is worth a history  
By a worse painter made.’

“ In administering to some of the best feelings of the human breast, he sacrifices health and the inestimable blessings of air and sunshine; and, in return, he sometimes receives a market price for his labours, that enables him, perhaps, to fill with decency the station which prejudice has allotted to him.”

His love for the country was great, and it is a well-founded view which credits him with the capacity to have made a great name in landscape

painting had the opportunity been afforded him. His feeling for landscape is abundantly shown in the backgrounds to his portraits, which are often exquisite in their arrangement and depth and the light and mystery of their skies; and still more so in the fine series of sketches preserved in the Print Room at the British Museum. These and the list of his sketches sold in 1810 show how widely he had wandered in England and Wales, and what excellent use he made of his opportunities. He was in the country when Porson made the celebrated raid upon him which led to the great scholar's drinking up Mrs. Hoppner's spirits of wine in mistake for gin, and it was in the course of a country outing with Edridge that he distinguished himself by thrashing a waggoner at a fair; and more than one of his backgrounds (such as those to the portraits of the Countess of Darnley and her sisters-in-law) must have been painted from sketches taken on the spot.

To estimate justly the place of Hoppner in English art is not altogether easy. Popular taste is now undergoing the inevitable reaction after the long and somewhat unaccountable period of neglect which followed his untimely death. Lawrence set a fashion which coincided only too closely with the taste of a commonplace and essentially vulgar age, his ladies simpered and his gentlemen posed exactly as society expected them to do, and Hoppner, with the severe plainness of his later style and his direct appeal to nature, was despised and forgotten. Now his pictures fetch extravagant prices—one of them, and that



LADY ELIZABETH CAVENDISH, *NÉE* COMPTON



not his best, has realised the highest sum yet bid for a picture in an English auction-room, and there is a consequent danger that he may be over-rated. It is, however, admitted by competent judges that his place is henceforth with Reynolds, Romney, and Gainsborough, though probably the lowest of the four. As a painter of children he was superior to Reynolds, as a painter of women his best work ran Reynolds close. But his portraits of men were not on the same level, and he was far inferior to Reynolds in breadth and power of interpretation. Gainsborough was Hoppner's superior as a colourist, and his best work was beyond Hoppner's reach; while in effortless witchery of movement and *abandon* and easy grace Romney in his happy moments, in spite of thin colouring and careless execution, stands alone. But Hoppner was a noble and powerful colourist, his women are sweet and graceful and his men virile, his children as natural and unaffected as only intimate acquaintance and sympathy with childhood could make them, while he possessed in a remarkable degree the gift, the peculiar dower of genius, of so grasping the essential features of his subject that no carelessness or slovenliness in unessential detail could affect the greatness of his work. True it is that this gift would sometimes fail him, and then he would put forth pictures unworthy of his brush; but the absence of frigid "correctness" in his pictures, while it is a blemish, is also an indirect testimony to his real greatness. He has been termed an imitator of Sir Joshua, but it is to be observed that his imita-

tion (if it were such) stopped short of the master's practice in more than one important particular. In his handling of reds he never permitted himself, as did Opie and others, to practise the perishable methods of Sir Joshua, and whereas Sir Joshua's reds faded out of his pictures in a very few years, Hoppner's are the most tenacious feature in subjects which Time has used most cruelly in other respects. To call him, as some have done, "a daring plagiarist of Reynolds" seems far in excess of the truth.

One reason for his popularity was to be found, no doubt, in his capacity for doing the best for his sitters. Gifford noted that, "in his constant wish to represent the gentleman, he sometimes failed to delineate the man," adding, however, that to this there were many splendid exceptions. Northcote said of him some years after his death—

"Hoppner frequently remarked that in painting ladies' portraits he used to make as beautiful a face as he could, then give it a likeness to the sitter, working down from this beautiful state until the bystanders should cry out, 'Oh, I see a likeness coming!' whereupon he stopped and never ventured to make it more like."

There must, however, have been considerable exaggeration in this, for his female portraits are remarkable for their individuality as distinct from mere prettiness, and when they can be checked by other portraits by contemporary artists—as in the case of Lady Charlotte Legge, whom Romney also painted—the identity is easily recognisable. As his style matured, Hoppner disregarded pretti-

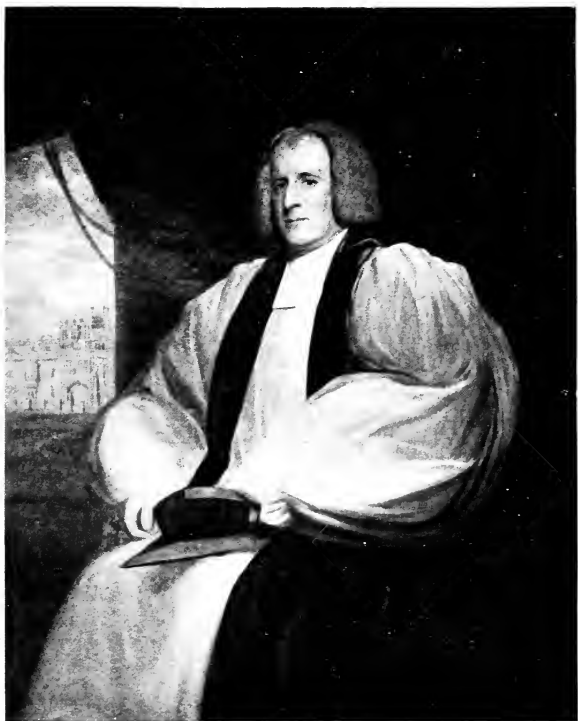
ness more and more, and in many of his most successful portraits, such as those of Lady Mary Arundell of Wardour and Miss Pollok, the sitters are positively plain, and no pains are taken to extenuate the circumstance.

Such glimpses of Hoppner's private life as we obtain, if we except one ill-natured speech of Rogers, are pleasing. His sons turned out well; the eldest, Catherine Hampden, became an Indian judge; the second, Richard Belgrave, was trained as an artist and produced some creditable work, but turned to diplomacy and became known as the friend and better angel of Lord Byron; Henry Parkyns Hoppner won distinction as a navigator and explorer, and was in command of the *Fury* when she was lost on Captain Parry's polar expedition; Lascelles grew up into an artist of promise, and won the Gold Medal in the Academy Schools in 1807, but died a few years later from the effects of a sunstroke, though not before he had exhibited in the Academy and had done some good and promising work. Two of his pictures are still to be seen at Holland House. Hoppner had great hopes of this son, and it was probably for him that he painted the famous copy of Gainsborough's "Blue Boy," which was for a while in his possession; the copy is believed to be in America, though the question as to which was the copy and which the original has never been finally set at rest, and the picture at Grosvenor House is thus not above the suspicion of being Hoppner's copy of the original. His daughter, Helen Clarence, married Captain Gallwey, R.N.,

shortly after her father's death, and her descendants are, we believe, still living. Mrs. Hoppner died about the end of 1827. We get a last pleasant glimpse of her bearding her old friend, Gifford, in his den, in an attempt to save John Keats from the review which is said to have hastened his end.

With Hoppner's death the great school of English portrait-painting may be said to have ended. Beechey, Northcote, and one or two lesser lights kept alive in an ever-diminishing measure faint traditions of a nobler time, but Lawrence was now the idol of the Court and society, and imposed his flashy ideals upon them, fit herald of the Early Victorian period, that golden age of insincerity and ugliness. For sixty or seventy years the blight continued, some would say that it has hardly lifted yet. But however later generations may regard the artistic achievements of our self-advertising age, it is certain that there will be nothing but admiration for the masters who created and continued the splendid English Art of the eighteenth century, not the least among whom was John Hoppner.





THE BISHOP OF BANGOR (DR. WILLIAM CLEAVER)



## A CATALOGUE OF THE PRINCIPAL WORKS BY JOHN HOPPNER, R.A.

The names in brackets indicate the engravers of the pictures; the titles, when given, those under which the pictures were engraved.

1780.

R.A. A Primrose Girl.

R.A. Portrait of a Lady.

James Nares, Mus. Doc. (W. Ward).

1781.

R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Lady Cunliffe?

The Fortune-teller (W. Humphrey).

1782.

R.A. Girl with Salad—Mrs. Hoppner (W. Ward).

R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Sir Richard Brooke?

R.A. Portrait of a Young Lady.

Mrs. Mary Robinson—replica after Sir Joshua.

Mrs. Mary Robinson—in grey dress.

“Cecilia”—Mrs. Louisa Lane (J. Baldrey).

Mrs. Mary Benwell (W. Ward).

Mrs. Siddons.

“A Youth”—John Meyer (J. Baldrey).

1783.

R.A. Portrait of a Young Gentleman—W. Locke, jun.?  
(Charles Townley).

R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Grace? (Anonymous).

R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman.

R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—the Countess of Mexborough? (W. Ward).

R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman.

The Hon. Diana Macdonald as a Gipsy Girl (J. Baldrey).

1784.

R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman's Son—the Hon. Captain Beauclerk.

R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Mr. Hall.

R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Beauchamp.

R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Miss Sophia Williams (J. R. Smith, "Sophia Western").

R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Talbot.

Edmund Ayrton, Mus. Doc.

Viscountess Hampden (J. Young).

A Girl with Pigeons (H. Kingsbury).

Pyramus (Charles Knight).

Thisbe (W. Nutter).

Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

1785.

R.A. Jupiter and Io, half-length.

R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—whole-length—Rev. John Jebb? (John Young).

R.A. H.R.H. Princess Sophia (Caroline Watson).

R.A. H.R.H. Princess Mary (Caroline Watson).

R.A. H.R.H. Princess Amelia.

R.A. A Primrose Girl.

Eliza, from *Yorrick*—Mrs. Hoppner (J. Kingsbury).

Eliza—Mrs. John Young (John Young).

Clara at the Tomb of Eloise (John Young).

H.R.H. Princess Charlotte.

1786.

R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Captain E. Lloyd.

R.A. Youth and Age.

## CATALOGUE OF PRINCIPAL WORKS 167

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Miss Crockatt? (J. Dean,  
"Julia de Roubigné").
- R.A. Mrs. Jordan as the Comic Muse (Thomas Park).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—three-quarters—Lady Hamilton  
as Neæra? (John Young).
- Lady Boughton.
- The Show—Lady Duncannon and her Children  
(John Young).
- Mrs. Crouch.
- Mrs. Gale.
- A Rescue from an Alligator (Henry Hudson).
- Jupiter and Io (Valentine Green).
- Sir Matthew White Ridley (J. Fittler).

1787.

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—three-quarters—Mrs. Hoppner  
(J. Dean, "Caroline de Lichtfield").
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—whole-length—Mrs. Boyd.
- R.A. Belisarius—kitcat (John Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—three-quarters—Rev. Mr.  
Carr.
- Mrs. Fielding.
- Miss Matilda Fielding, "The Hurdy-gurdy Player."
- Miss Augusta Fielding.
- The Countess of Carysfort.
- Richard Humphreys (John Young).

1788.

- R.A. A Standard-bearer.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—whole-length—Mrs. Braddyll.
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—the Duke of Roxburghe.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Tolfrey.
- R.A. A Nymph.
- William Smith, actor. National Portrait Gallery.
- Love Enamoured (P. W. Tomkins).
- Anne Elizabeth, Countess of Aldborough (S. Einslie).
- Miss Coussmaker.

1789.

- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman.
- R.A. Portraits of a Young Lady and Two Children—the  
Godsall Children (John Young, "The Setting  
Sun").
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—Lord Henry Fitzgerald  
(Thomas Park).
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman.
- R.A. Infant Vanity—the Hoppner Children? (John Young).
- R.A. A Bacchante.  
Edward Lascelles, Esq.

1790.

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Gwyn (John Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Bunbury (John Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Girl.  
Miss Maria Bover—(Caroline Watson).  
Maria—Lady Trevelyan (Anonymous).  
Dr. Benjamin Moseley.  
J. M. W. Turner in Boyhood.  
The Countess of Aylesford.

1791.

- R.A. H.R.H. The Duke of York (C. H. Hodges).
- R.A. H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence (C. H. Hodges).
- R.A. Portraits of Children—the Hoppner Children (James  
Ward, "Children Bathing").
- R.A. Cupid and Psyche (John Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman's Son.
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman.
- R.A. Mrs. Jordan as "Hypolita" (John Jones).  
Evelina—Miss Burney? (J. Baldrey).

1792.

- R.A. H.R.H. The Duke of York (W. Dickinson).
- R.A. H.R.H. The Duchess of York (W. Dickinson).

## CATALOGUE OF PRINCIPAL WORKS 169

- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—Lord Macartney?
- R.A. H.R.H. The Prince of Wales.
- R.A. A Sleeping Venus.
- R.A. H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence (Charles Knight).
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Admiral Duncan?

1793.

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—the Duchess of Dorset ?  
Lady Jane Dundas (Bartolozzi).  
The Raising of Jairus's Daughter (Thompson).

1794.

- R.A. Portrait of a Young Gentleman.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Caroline Capel.
- R.A. Portrait of a Bishop—Dr. Porteus, Bishop of London?  
(Henry Meyer).
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—Lord Moira? (J. Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman.
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—The Artist, Diploma  
picture? (Charles Turner and Henry Meyer).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Parkyns (C. Wilkin).
- R.A. A Gale of Wind.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Charlotte  
Legge? (Charles Wilkin).  
Charlotte, Viscountess St. Asaph (C. Wilkin).  
Francis Joseph Haydn.  
"Nature when unadorn'd adorn'd the most" (C.  
Knight).

1795.

- R.A. Portraits of Children—the Douglas Children (James  
Ward, "Juvenile Retirement").
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—the Duke of Rutland.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Charlotte Pirey.
- R.A. Portrait of a Judge—Mr. Justice Rooke.
- R.A. Portraits of Young Ladies—The Daughters of Sir  
Thomas Frankland (William Ward, "The Sisters").

- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—Lord Weymouth.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Young.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Charlotte Greville (John Young).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Darnley.
- R.A. Portrait of an Officer—Colonel Grosvenor.  
The Wood Girl (J. Gisborne).  
Lady Caroline Wrottesley.

1796.

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Jordan as Rosalind (John Jones).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Michael Angelo Taylor (James Ward, "Miranda").
- R.A. H.R.H. The Prince of Wales.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Charlotte Campbell, "Aurora" (Charles Wilkin).
- R.A. H.R.H. The Duke of Clarence.
- R.A. Portrait of a Young Gentleman—Master Alexander.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Bligh.
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—the Duke of Bedford (P. W. Tomkins).
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Lascelles.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Paget.
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Mr. Manners.  
Mrs. Thornton.  
Sir Ralph Abercromby.  
Mrs. Elizabeth Billington.  
The Bishop of Meath—Rt. Rev. Lucius O'Beirne.  
Mrs. O'Beirne.  
Mrs. Martin.  
Miss Judith Beresford.  
Miss Frances Beresford.  
Thomas Babington of Rothley Temple.  
Rev. Thomas Gisborne.



1797.

- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—the Earl of Uxbridge.
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—the Duke of Bedford (J. R. Smith).
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—The Earl of Carlisle (Henry Meyer).
- R.A. Portraits of a Nobleman's Children—Children of the Duke of Dorset.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality—Lady Oxford.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. R. B. Sheridan (T. Nugent, "Fetching Water").
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman and his Son—Lord Berkeley.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Miss Morris, of Swansea.
- R.A. Portrait of a Nobleman—Lord Gower.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady and her Son—Mrs. Caldwell.
- R.A. Portrait of a Gentleman—Mr. Morris.
- R.A. The Idle Girl.
- R.A. Portrait of the Master of Eaton—Dr. Heath (Wright).
- Lord Mornington, afterwards Marquess of Wellesley.
- Lady Mornington and her Sons.
- Lady Pilkington.
- Miss Charlotte Estwick, afterwards Mrs. Denison.
- Lady Coote, of Donnybrook.
- William Gifford—for John Murray (Ridley).
- William Gifford—for Dean Ireland (Anonymous).

1798.

- R.A. Lord Paget, horse by S. Gilpin.
- R.A. The Countess of Clare.
- R.A. The Hon. Miss Chetwynd.
- R.A. Viscount Duncan (James Ward).
- R.A. Mr. Canning.
- R.A. The Earl of Inchiquin (S. W. Reynolds).
- R.A. Lady Anne Lambton and Children (John Young, "Domestic Happiness").

- R.A. The Countess of Oxford. National Gallery (S. W. Reynolds).  
 R.A. The Hon. Mrs. Edward Bouverie (J. R. Smith).  
 R.A. Mrs. Whitbread (S. W. Reynolds).  
 R.A. Mrs. George Hibbert (James Ward).  
     George Hibbert, Esq. (James Ward).  
     Emma Laura Whitbread, afterwards Viscountess  
     Eversley.  
     Miss Charlotte Goodall, as Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows* (Henry Cooke).  
     Colonel the Hon. John Hope, afterwards Earl of  
     Hopetoun (John Young).  
     Sir William Mordaunt Milner (J. R. Smith).  
     Charlotte Maria, Countess of Euston (C. Wilkin).  
     Sir Richard Carr Glyn (W. Say).  
     Lady Elizabeth Howard, afterwards Duchess of  
     Rutland (Charles Wilkin).  
     Admiral Lord Keith (Ridley and W. Holl).  
     Miss Mary Linwood. Victoria and Albert Museum.  
     Miss Eleanor Campbell, afterwards Mrs. Jopp.  
     Keith Jopp, Esq.  
     Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, *née* Compton.

1799.

- R.A. The Countess of Sutherland.  
 R.A. Mrs. Orby Hunter (John Young).  
 R.A. The Archbishop of York—Dr. Markham.  
 R.A. Mr. Boswell.  
 R.A. Viscountess Melbourne.  
 R.A. The Duke of Rutland (Charles Turner).  
 R.A. The Earl of Chatham (Valentine Green).  
 R.A. Mrs. Arbuthnot (S. W. Reynolds).  
     Lady Andover (Charles Wilkin).  
     Lady Langham (Charles Wilkin).

# CATALOGUE OF PRINCIPAL WORKS 173

1800.

- R.A. Lady Georgiana Gordon, afterwards Duchess of Bedford (S. W. Reynolds).
- R.A. Children of the Earl of Sefton.
- R.A. H.R.H. The Princess of Wales.
- R.A. H.S.H. The Prince of Orange.
- R.A. The Hon. Miss Harris.
- R.A. Mrs. Arbuthnot.
- R.A. The Rt. Hon. Lord Grenville. National Portrait Gallery.
- R.A. Lady Paget.
- Lady Anne Culling Smith and Daughters.
- George Capel Coningsby, 5th Earl of Essex (Charles Turner).
- The Bishop of Bangor—Dr. W. Cleaver (Jas. Ward).
- The Bishop of Bath and Wells—Dr. Charles Moss (S. W. Reynolds).
- The Rt. Hon. William Dundas (S. W. Reynolds).
- Robert Bloomfield.

1801.

- Colonel Thomas Graham of Balgowan, afterwards Lord Lynedoch (S. W. Reynolds).
- Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart. (S. W. Reynolds).
- George John, 2nd Earl Spencer (S. W. Reynolds).
- Thomas, Lord Pelham, afterwards Earl of Chichester (S. W. Reynolds).
- Henry Phipps, 1st Earl Mulgrave (S. W. Reynolds).
- Frederick William, Lord Hervey (John Young).
- Lady Gordon of Letterfourie.
- Thomas Egerton, 1st Earl of Wilton (Charles Turner).
- Edward, afterwards 5th Earl of Darnley.
- Elizabeth, Countess of Darnley, and her Daughter, Lady E. Bligh.
- Scene from *Cymbeline*. Boydell's Gallery (Robert Thew).
- Lord Clare (Charles Turner).

1802.

- R.A. Mary.  
 Rt. Hon. William Windham, M.P. (W. Say).  
 Robert, Earl of Grosvenor (John Young and Henry Meyer).  
 Thomas Grosvenor, Esq. (John Young).  
 Mrs. Pearson at the age of eighteen.  
 Louisa, Duchess of St. Albans.  
 Horatio, Viscount Nelson (Charles Turner).

1803.

- R.A. Psyche's Return from the Infernal Shades with the Box of Beauty: Portrait of Miss Grimston, afterwards the Hon. Mrs. Berkeley Paget (Henry Meyer).  
 R.A. Lady Grenville.  
 R.A. The Bishop of Durham—Dr. Shute Barrington.  
 R.A. Son of H. Davison, Esq.  
 R.A. The Bishop of Carlisle—Dr. Venables Vernon Harcourt (Charles Turner).  
 R.A. Lady Mildmay and Child (W. Say).  
 R.A. Lady E. Bligh.  
 R.A. Young Lady with a dog—Miss Arabella Jane Wilmot? (G. Clint, "Love me, love my dog").  
 The Marquess of Cornwallis (Henry Meyer).  
 Francis, Earl of Moira (Bartolozzi and H. Landseer).  
 John Russell, 6th Duke of Bedford.  
 Rt. Hon. William Windham, M.P. (S. W. Reynolds).  
 Sir Thomas Theophilus Metcalfe, Bart. (W. Ward).  
 Margaret Emma, Lady Kenyon (Henry Meyer).  
 The Marquess of Cornwallis (W. Holl).  
 H.R.H. Edward, Duke of Kent.  
 Lady Heathcote, as Hebe (James Ward).

# CATALOGUE OF PRINCIPAL WORKS 175

1804.

- R.A. Miss Cholmondeley (Charles Turner).  
The Countess of Cholmondeley and Son (Charles Turner).  
Henry Kirke White.  
William, Son of Lord William Russell (S. W. Reynolds).  
Horatio, Viscount Nelson (Henry Meyer).  
Miss Pollok.  
Lady Douglas.  
The Archbishop of Narbonne—the Most Rev. Arthur Dillon.

1805.

- R.A. Lady Mulgrave (George Clint).  
R.A. The Hon. Miss Mercer.  
R.A. Master Smith (William Ward, "The Nabob").  
R.A. Mrs. Jerningham (Henry Meyer, "Hebe").  
R.A. The Duke of Grafton (Charles Turner and H. R. Cooke).  
R.A. Mrs. Manning and Child.  
Lady Palmerston.  
The Duchess of Rutland.  
Lady Florence Balfour.  
Lady Caroline Lamb.  
Lodge Evans, Lord Frankfort (W. W. Barney).  
Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Bart. (Charles Turner).  
The Archbishop of Canterbury—Dr. Charles Manners Sutton (Charles Turner).  
Sir Henry Blackwood (Charles Turner).

1806.

- R.A. The Rt. Hon. Earl Camden (William Ward).  
R.A. A Primrose Girl.  
R.A. The Rt. Hon. William Pitt (Lightfoot, Colnaghi, and others).

- R.A. The Hon. Major-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, K.B.  
(W. W. Barney).
- R.A. The Rt. Hon. Sir William Scott, afterwards Lord  
Stowell (George Clint).
- R.A. A Sleeping Nymph—Miss Cottin, afterwards Lady  
de Tabley (William Ward).
- R.A. The Rt. Hon. J. H. Frere (W. W. Barney).

1807.

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady of Quality — Lady Louisa  
Manners? (Charles Turner).
- R.A. Lord King.
- R.A. Portrait of a Lady (Miss St. Clare).
- R.A. The Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville (C. Turner).
- R.A. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (W. Say).
- R.A. Lord Hawkesbury (Henry Meyer).
- R.A. The Rt. Hon. Charles Long, afterwards Lord  
Farnborough.
- R.A. Sir Samuel Hood (George Clint).
- Sir Archibald Edmonstone, Bart. (Charles Turner).
- Sir Soulden Lawrence, Judge (Charles Turner).
- Lady Mary Grenville, afterwards Lady Mary  
Arundell of Wardour.
- Thomas, Lord Erskine (R. Woodman).
- Lady Pollington.
- Rt. Hon. George Canning, M.P. (John Young).
- Lieut.-Gen. Viscount Cathcart (Henry Meyer and  
C. Bestland).

1808.

- The Duke of Richmond (Henry Meyer).
- Lady St. John of Bletsoe (W. W. Barney).
- Sir Charles Henry Coote.

1809.

- R.A. The Earl of Essex.
- R.A. Sir George Beaumont (J. S. Agar and W. Say).

# CATALOGUE OF PRINCIPAL WORKS 177

- R.A. Portrait of a Lady—Mrs. Inchbald?
- R.A. Earl Spencer (Henry Meyer).
- R.A. Earl St. Vincent (H. Robinson).
- R.A. The Countess of Essex.  
     The Hon. Henry Legge (Charles Turner).  
     Rt. Hon. Lord Braybrooke (Charles Turner).  
     Edward Forster, Esq. (Charles Turner).  
     The Very Rev. the Hon. Edward Legge, Dean of  
         Windsor (Charles Turner).  
     Lady de Tabley (Henry Meyer).  
     John Eveleigh, D.D., Provost of Oriel (W. Say).  
     The Bishop of London, Dr. John Randolph (C.  
         Turner).

## UNDATED PICTURES.

- The Marchioness of Abergavenny.
- The Marquess of Athole (Charles Knight).
- Mrs. Batt of New Hall, Salisbury.
- James Buller (S. W. Reynolds).
- Edmund Burke.
- Mrs. Burrell.
- Nancy Carey.
- Hon. Maria Pelham-Carleton.
- Lady Almeria Carpenter.
- The Rev. John Cooke, D.D., President of Corpus Christi  
     College (Charles Turner).
- The Hon. John and Henry Cust.
- Walter Fawkes of Farnley (W. Say).
- Rt. Hon. Charles James Fox.
- Princess Sophia Matilda of Gloucester.
- Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville (T. A. Dean).
- Warren Hastings.
- Lady Langham, whole-length.
- Miss Hannah More.
- Ven. Robert Nares, Archdeacon of Stafford.

Horatio, Viscount Nelson (Charles Turner).

Maria Walpole, Duchess of Gloucester.

Mrs. O'Hara (Anonymous).

Admiral J. Willett Paine (Colnaghi).

Lady Henry Peacock.

Samuel Rogers.

Sir Sidney Smith.

Robert Southey.

Lady Spencer (W. Say).

Lady Hester Stanhope.

Daughter of the Earl of Westmorland as an angel among clouds.

Numerous unidentified portraits of ladies, some of which have fetched high prices.

A Shepherdess (J. Dean).



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# INDEX

- "A Sleeping Nymph," 55, 134,  
 135, 136, 137  
 Anderdon, 23, 25  
 Armstrong, Sir Walter, 50  
 Arundell of Wardour, Lady  
 Mary, 143  
  
 Babington, Thomas, of Rothley  
 Temple, 81, 82, 117  
 Beechey, William, 39, 70, 75,  
 76, 86, 91, 164  
 Belgrave, Lord, 35, 37  
 "Blue Boy," the, 163  
 Bouverie, Hon. Mrs. E., 94  
 Boydell, Alderman, 62, 92,  
 118  
 Braddyll, Mrs., 47  
 Bunbury, Mrs., 52  
 Burney, Fanny, 60  
  
 Campbell, Lady Charlotte, 79,  
 80  
 Canning, George, 95, 111, 144  
 "Caroline de Lichtfield," 42  
 Cavendish, Lady Elizabeth,  
 100  
 Cholmondeley, Miss, 124  
 Clarence, the Duke of, 31  
 Cleaver, Dr. William, Bishop  
 of Bangor, 112  
 Cowper, Lady (afterwards  
 Lady Palmerston), 132, 149  
  
 Cunliffe, Lady, 18  
 Cunningham, Allan, 9, 46,  
 104, 156  
  
 Darnley portraits, the, 74, 76,  
 78, 115, 116, 122, 160  
 Dillon, Most Rev. Arthur,  
 Archbishop of Narbonne,  
 127  
 Douglas, Lady, 126  
 Douglas Children, the, 70, 71  
  
 Euston, Charlotte Maria,  
 Countess of, 98  
  
 Fielding, Miss Matilda, as  
 "The Hurdy-Gurdy Player,"  
 44  
 Fitzgerald, Lord Henry, as  
 "Don Felix," 50  
 Frankland, the Daughters of  
 Sir Thomas, 70, 72, 73, 74  
 Fuseli, Henry, 46, 91, 120  
  
 Gainsborough, Thomas, 14, 20,  
 25, 26, 52, 118 [3  
 Gallwey, Rev. Thomas Gifford,  
 George III., 2, 3, 8, 28, 53,  
 54, 93, 99  
 Gifford, William, 1, 4, 7, 35,  
 36, 37, 86, 87, 89, 90, 95,  
 110, 111, 120, 127, 156, 162  
 Gillray, James, 82, 90, 91, 139

Goldsmith, Oliver, 53  
 Gordon, Lady Georgiana (afterwards Duchess of Bedford), 108  
 Graham, Thomas, of Balgowan (afterwards Lord Lynedoch), 114, 117, 144  
 Green, Valentine, 104  
 Gwyn, Mrs., 52  
 Hamilton, Lady, 17, 26, 31  
 Hampden, Viscountess, 24, 35  
 Haydn, Francis Joseph, 67, 68, 69  
 Hibbert, Mr. and Mrs. George, 93, 94  
 Hoppner, Catherine Hampden, 35, 58, 163  
 Hoppner, Helen Clarence, 35, 163  
 Hoppner, Henry Parkyns, 58, 65, 163  
 Hoppner, John, R.A.: birth, 1; chorister in the Chapel Royal, 3, 34; at the Academy Schools, 4, 7, 9, 10; cast adrift as a boy, 5, 7; the enmity of West, 8, 34; marriage with Phoebe Wright, 10; early pictures in the Royal Academy, 10, 11, 14, 18; and the return to nature, 16; paints Mrs. Siddons and "Perdita," 20; noticed by William Locke of Norbury Park, 22; his handling of red, 25, 162; and Sir Joshua Reynolds, 26; portrait painter to the Prince of Wales, 27, 34, 50; paints three Royal Princesses, 28;

loss of favour at St. James's, 33, 44; children, 35, 50, 58, 163; friendship with Gifford, 36, 86, 90, 111, 156; criticism on Peters' "Adam and Eve," 37; contemporary criticism (1787), 40; imperfect draughtsmanship, 43, 131; an accomplished pugilist, 45; the rivalry of Lawrence, 46, 47, 61, 87, 116, 154, 155; visit to Paris (1802), 56, 120; Mrs. Jordan at "Hypolita," 58; elected an Associate, 64; an Academician, 69; and the Evangelical circle, 66, 117; portrait of himself, 67, 68; female portraits, 73; dispute with Beechey, 75, 76; caricatured by Gillray, 82; at the height of his reputation, 87; *Titianus Redivivus*, 91; close of his best period, 114; and the Darnley family, 115; alters a portrait in accordance with suggestion by J. Ward, 120; and the *Quarterly Review*, 146, 157; illness and death, 148, 149, 164; critical estimate, 157, 160, 161; *Oriental Tales*, 158, 159; feeling for landscape, 160; private life, 163  
 Hoppner, John, Surgeon, 2  
 Hoppner, Mary Anne, 2, 6, 13  
 Hoppner, Phoebe (*née* Wright), 8, 10, 18, 19, 23, 25, 30, 42, 68, 164  
 Hoppner, Richard Belgrave, 35, 58, 163

- Hoppner, Wilson Lascelles, 79, 163
- Hornecks, the, 53
- Howard, Lady Elizabeth (afterwards Duchess of Rutland), 100, 132, 133
- Hunter, Mrs. Orby, 103
- Jervis, John, Earl of St. Vincent, 146, 147
- Jordan, Mrs., 30, 31, 32, 33, 59, 76
- "Julia de Roubigné," 33
- Keith, Admiral Lord, 100, 101
- Lamb, Lady Caroline, 39, 132
- Lambton, Lady Anne, and children, 93
- Lascelles, Mrs., 78, 79
- Lawrence, Thomas, 8, 9, 21, 27, 34, 38, 45, 46, 47, 52, 57, 60, 61, 63, 64, 69, 70, 86, 87, 92, 105, 107, 119, 154, 155, 156
- Legge, Lady Charlotte, 26, 67, 68, 162
- Locke, William, of Norbury Park, 21, 22, 60
- Manners, Lady Louisa, 120, 140, 141, 152
- Melbourne, Viscountess, 103
- Meyer, Henry, 7, 68, 83, 126, 130, 137, 147, 148
- Meyer, J. H., 7, 121
- Mexborough, the Countess of, 21, 26, 49, 127
- "Miranda" (Mrs. Michael Angelo Taylor, *née* Frances Anne Vane), 77, 78, 152
- Monkhouse, Cosmo, 3
- Murray, John, 111, 123
- Nares, Dr. James, 18 [149]
- Nelson, Viscount, 119, 125, "No Popery" riots, 15
- Northcote, James, 9, 22, 162, 164
- Opie, John, 23, 76, 91, 162
- Oxford, Lady, 83, 92, 120
- Paris Exhibition (1901), 29
- Pasquin, Anthony, 3, 8, 34, 35, 36, 53, 64, 75, 76, 78, 80, 82, 83, 86, 88, 89, 111
- "Perdita" (Mrs. Mary Robinson), 20
- "Peter Pindar," 36, 89, 111
- Peters, Rev. Matthew William, R.A., 37
- Pitt, William, 26, 103, 105, 134, 138, 139, 149, 152
- Prince of Wales, the, 11, 26, 27, 44, 62, 76, 139, 141, 142
- Raeburn, Henry, 97
- Ramberg, Henry, his views of the Royal Academy, 23, 42, 47
- Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 9, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25, 29, 33, 40, 43, 47, 52, 60, 71, 95, 151, 161, 162
- Rogers, Samuel, 8, 9, 34, 120, 156, 163
- Romney, George, 15, 17, 25, 30, 40, 50, 52, 67, 157, 162
- Rutland, Duchess of (*see* Lady Elizabeth Howard)
- Sackville children, the, 82, 84

- Sandby, William, 20, 21, 90  
 Scott, Sir William (afterwards Lord Stowell), 138  
 Shee, Martin Archer, 46, 65, 70, 88, 120, 157  
 Sheridan, Mrs., 83, 95, 149  
 Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, 26, 150  
 Siddons, Mrs., 20  
 Smith, Lady Anne Culling, 109, 110, 130  
 Smith, Master ("The Nabob"), 110, 129, 130  
 Smith, John Raphael, 23, 79, 83, 94  
 Smith, Rev. Sydney, 94, 111, 156 [152  
 Smith, William, actor, 48, 49, "Sophia Western," 23  
 Spencer, George John, second Earl, 147  
 Stothard, Thomas, 91, 157  
 Sutherland, Duchess-Countess of, 102, 104  
 Thornton, Henry, 117  
 Turner, Charles, 68, 112, 118, 124, 131, 134, 142, 144, 145, 147, 152  
 Turner, J. M. W., in boyhood, 55  
 Ward, James, 58, 62, 78, 119, 152  
 Ward, William, 18, 20, 21, 73, 123, 134, 135, 152  
 Wellesley portraits, 149  
 West, Benjamin, 4, 5, 8, 10, 38, 91, 120  
 White, Henry Kirke, 127  
 Wilkin, Charles, 66, 98, 100, 106, 107  
 Williams, John. *See* Anthony Pasquin  
 Wright, Patience, 8, 11, 12, 19  
 Wolcot, Dr. John. *See* "Peter Pindar"  
 Young, John, 29, 30, 43, 51, 57, 84, 85, 93, 95, 97, 118



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